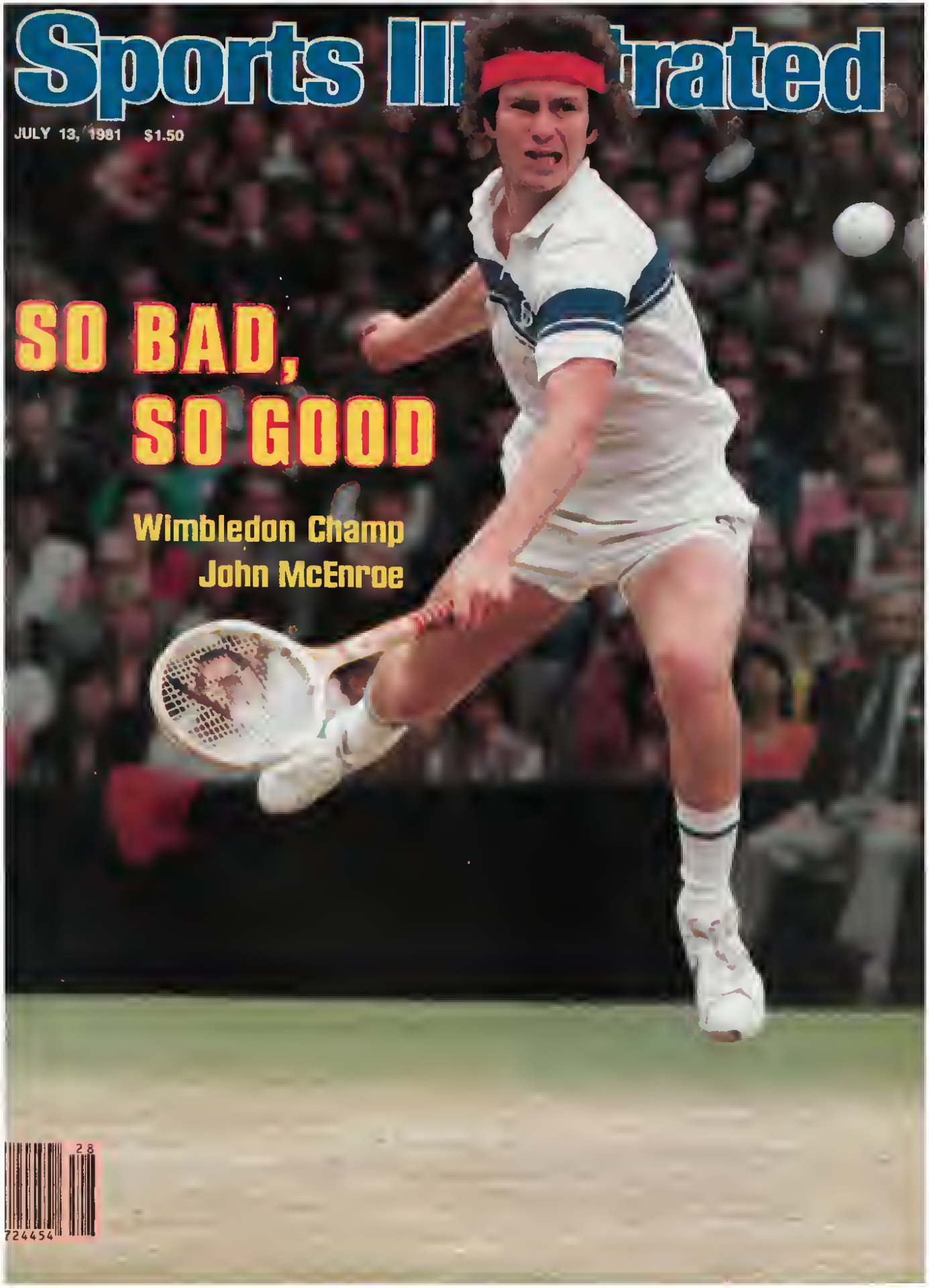

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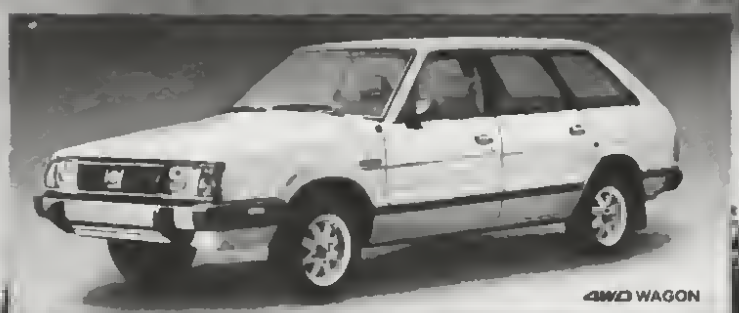
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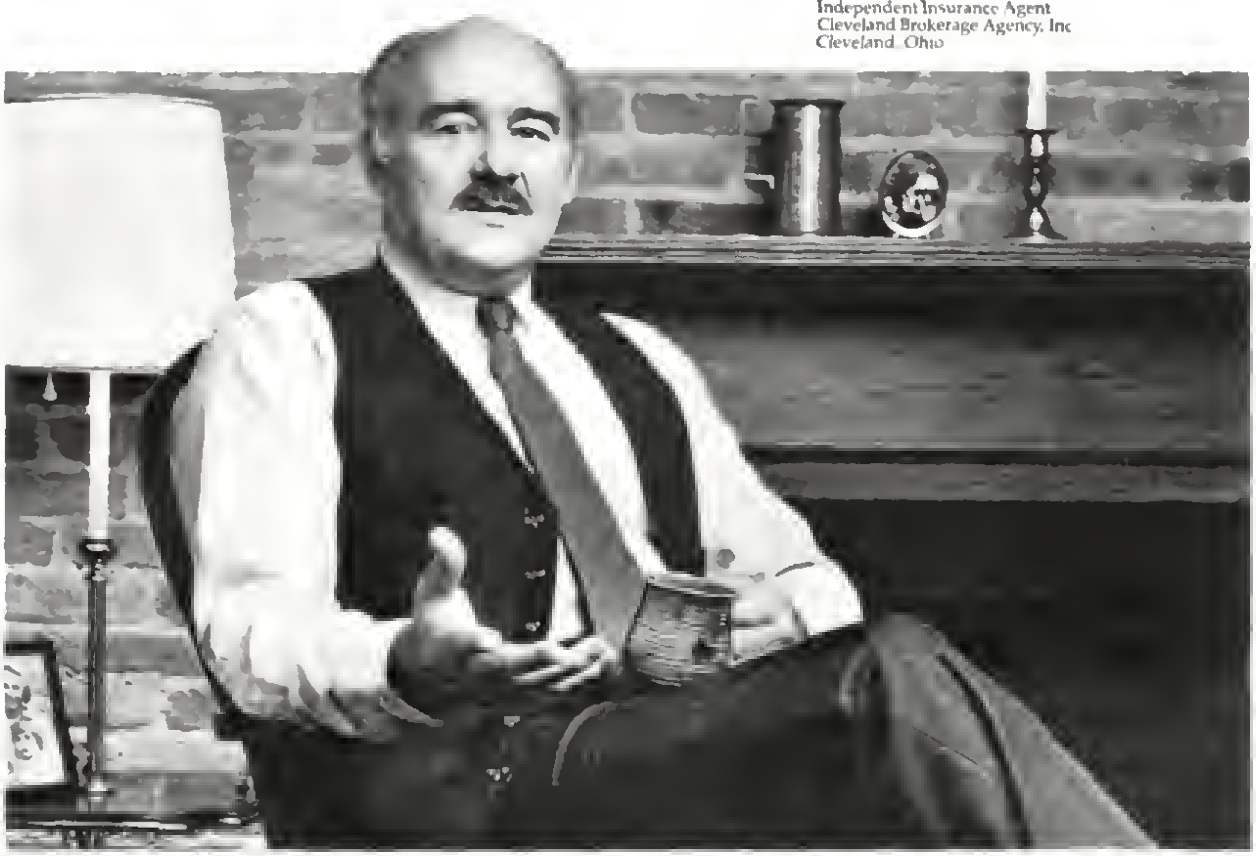
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CONTENTS

JULY 13, 1981 *Volume 55, No. 3*

Cover photograph by Walter Iooss Jr.

His Earth, His Realm, His England 14

John McEnroe drew censure—and gained admiration—as he stripped Bjorn Borg of his Wimbledon crown **by Curry Kirkpatrick**

Baseball Comes Back to the Big Time 22

The turnstiles were clicking and the fans were cheering as players took the field at two major league stadiums last week **by Ron Fimrite**

Heck, Mes Amis, It's Only Ol' Cale 28

Culture shock took on a whole new dimension when Cale Yarborough revved up his stock car at the 24 Hours of Le Mans **by Bob Ottum**

Boom Boom Time Again 45

Ray (Boom Boom) Mancini is trying for something his father was denied almost four decades ago—a shot at the lightweight title **by E.M. Swift**

Hey, Kid, Wanna Be a Star? 62

Because no rules prevent it, many young Latins fall easy prey to unrealistic promises of fame and fortune in the big leagues **by Bill Brubaker**

The Departments

Scorecard	9	Pro Basketball	58	19th Hole	82
Cycling	55	For the Record	81	*Credits on page 81*	

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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER



BRUBAKER AND MILLAN ARE BACK UP NORTH

Bill Brubaker's story of how the careers of many young Latin baseball players are cruelly foreshortened, which begins on page 62, is one he has been pondering since 1974, for reasons having less to do with baseball than with a concern for the plight of the unemployed in Latin America.

Born in Manhattan in 1951, Brubaker moved to Miami at seven and graduated from that city's Biscayne College with a degree in English. "I worked in radio all through college, announcing sports," he says. "I thought my career would be in radio, but I decided you can't really examine meaningful issues in the amount of time you get on the air." In 1972 Brubaker went to work for the *Hollywood* (Fla.) *Sun-Tatler* as a sportswriter and then spent seven years on the sports staff of *The Miami News*. From 1978 to '80 he was SI's special correspondent in Miami. Last year he returned to Manhattan to write for the New York *Daily News*.

Brubaker has traveled to some 40 countries, mostly on his own, though he did some sports reporting for *The Miami News* in Panama, Venezuela, Haiti, the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic. "I did a story about Orlando Cepeda, who was in prison in Florida at the time," Brubaker recalls. (Cepeda, a former major-leaguer of distinction from Puerto Rico, had been jailed on drug-related charges.) "We got to talking about the young Latins who never made it in baseball, and he mentioned Jorge Lebron, the Puerto Rican shortstop signed by the Phillies in 1974, at the age of 14. Cepeda said that Lebron was out of baseball, back home and not coping well."

When Brubaker began work on his story for SI he made numerous calls to Puerto Rico trying to track down Lebron. "I also called Cepeda and a scout down there and asked them to give my phone number to Lebron if they found him," Brubaker says.

After a long week's wait, Lebron did telephone, and he had someone with him who spoke English, a relief to Brubaker, who speaks only "chit-chat" Spanish. They talked with what Brubaker recalls as the somehow reassuring sounds of church bells in the background.

Staff Photographer Manny Millan encountered obstacles of his own in shooting most of the pictures that accompany Brubaker's article. One of the stops he made was in Bradenton, Fla., for photographs of minor-leaguer Jose Rijo, who had been signed by the Yankees at 15. "We also had to work out the logistics of getting photographs of his family in the Dominican Republic," says Millan. While Rijo made the necessary calls, Millan kept him supplied with rolls of quarters for the pay phone—120 quarters in all.

The arrangements Rijo made were, at best, iffy. Drive a few miles out of Santo Domingo, he told Millan, to the plaza in San Cristobal. There, on the church steps, will be Geraldo, who will be wearing a red shirt with the number 81. Geraldo will lead the way from there.

Millan found the church but no number 81. "Then I found a boy wearing a Pirates sweatshirt, and he took me right to the house," he says. It was no small plus through all of this that Millan, though born in Bayonne, N.J., speaks Spanish like a native.

Brubaker also went to the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. He found a number of Dominican ballplayers in Sarasota, Fla., made a great many more telephone calls, and seven years after he had conceived the article, we are happy to say he finished it for us.

Philip D. Howlett

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BOOKTALK

by DOUGLAS S. LOONEY

THIS NOVEL IS A GOOD BET IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT MAKES GAMBLERS TICK

Gambling seems so romantic. Indeed, beats there a heart that wouldn't feel a rush when a pro football team wins by four, covering the three-point spread, and you win your $20 bet? But moments later, a haunting thought invariably ruins the high: "Why didn't I bet $200? Or $2,000?" Suddenly, winning isn't good enough.

That dissatisfaction is what Robert Kalich writes about in his intriguing first novel, *The Handicapper* (Crown Publishers, Inc., $12.95). The glory of this book is that Kalich gives a dead-honest account of the Dismal Science of Gambling. Gambling prospers, of course, because it holds out the prospect of something for nothing. Pick the winners and—bingo!—you're in Fat City while other poor slobs sweat on assembly lines. In truth, gambling is the last hope of the desperate and the salvation of an infinitesimal few. It's a miserable addiction, a self-destructive endeavor, but, damn, wouldn't it be fun to be a gambler?

Such are the contradictions on which Kalich has a firm grasp. When Debbie, the good girl in the book, reflects on her intended husband, Jimmy, and on her friendship with the main character, David Lazar, she muses, "How many times can I tell myself that Jimmy is loving, stable and secure; that David's a gambler and a bad risk, self-indulgent and selfish?" Guess who she really loves?

Kalich writes with the fervor of a guy intimately familiar with gambling and losing, having gambled and lost—one sooner or later follows the other—as well as worked on a newspaper as a horse racing handicapper. His story is full of gamblers: Nathan Rubin ("Only suckers do it for the fun of it"), Ed Kashman ("When you put your money on the line you stop being a fan"), Solomon Lepidus ("The good get buried and the bastards carry the caskets"). But most of all, Kalich's book is about Lazar, a Harlem social worker who knows that beyond those mean streets—somewhere—are rainbows and pots of gold, bright lights and limousines. Having made his decision to gamble on a grand scale, he grouses, "On take-home pay of three hundred and twenty-two dollars and fifty-eight cents every two weeks, I bet two thousand on the Celtics . . and I lose. I must be nuts."

Must be. But it's exactly this kind of behavior that gives wonderful insight into the ways of a gambling mind. If you aren't able to understand why it's so special to bet and win, maybe you'll comprehend it after you read what Lazar says of a gambler: "He'd rather be broke and



dreaming of winning . . . than losing a little as his father had done every God-fearing, dollar-pinching day of his sensible, decent, pathetic life."

We suffer along with Lazar, through the collapse of his marriage—a friend consoles him, "Loving a woman that don't love you back is like bouncing a basketball without air in it"—and his plunge into betting college hoops. He favors this sport because there are so many games that the possibility of catching the official betting line way off are far stronger than, say, in major league baseball, where the chances of such a misjudgment by the oddsmakers are remote. And fellow gambler Rubin reminds Lazar that "you always have a much better chance when it's a point spread rather than an odd." That may be why in real life betting on college basketball is on the upswing and can result in something like the Boston College point-shaving mess that broke last winter.

Eventually, Lazar has success. Big success. But his life only gets worse. Kalich writes, "He had succeeded in acquiring money, but there was never anything enriching or fulfilling about that." Nothing speaks to the sickness of gambling better than that. Could it be that the gambler is a masochist who's really only happy when he loses and that winning fouls up his strange psyche?

Occasionally Kalich inserts how-to segments into *The Handicapper*, but his advice on gambling, while valid, detracts from the story: Maximize your bets when you're ahead and minimize when you're behind, home-court advantage is crucial; look for games where your opinion differs substantially from the official line. The book also suffers slightly from a lack of character development, especially when it comes to Lazar's wife, Leslie. And it would be nice to have more detail on exactly how Lazar gets such great info on college hoops, other than by living on the telephone.

But these are nits that are outweighed by Kalich's knowledge of his subject and his prose. He describes Lazar's father: "He had been a man of large opinion but little perspective, a man who had learned only to build in straight lines and who cared not at all about the curves." Kalich's best writing involves Lazar's attempt to explain the lure of gambling to Debbie. "Sex can never duplicate or replace the thrill you get from gambling—that mania to live on the edge" he says. "Your eyes twitch, your legs jerk, your heart pumps. You wring your hands, grind your teeth, bite your lips."

Kalich has written a compelling novel that transmits the flat-out thrill of putting your money where your heart is. Yet he has produced a book that presents to the logical mind—which has no relationship to the gambling mind—a depressing, grim tale of what betting is all about. Lazar's twin brother, Doug, sums it up best when he calls gambling "just another sick way to make you feel alive." *The Handicapper* is alive. Bet on it. END



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SCORECARD

Edited by JERRY KIRSHENBAUM

THE UNITED PLAYERS LEAGUE?

As if the four-week-old baseball strike hadn't already bent the national pastime out of recognizable shape, listen to this: Marvin Miller, the executive director of the striking Major League Players Association, said when questioned last week that if the walkout extended into 1982, an eventuality that appeared less remote with each passing day of stalemated negotiations, the players might attempt to establish their own league, just as an earlier generation of striking players vainly tried to do in 1914 with the Federal League. Miller conceded that because the players are under contract to big league clubs for 1981, they couldn't start their own league this season. But he warned that the situation will change radically if the strike drags on. "If the owners are foolish enough to end this season without a settlement, they'd spark a big fire among the players," Miller told SI's Franz Lidz. "It would take time to have a fully viable new league, but you could start with four or six teams and build from there. It could be done."

The potentially enormous problems of coming up with investors, ball parks and TV contracts aside, there seems little doubt that a strike-born league could have considerable fan appeal. Approximately 80 of the current 650 major-leaguers, including Reggie Jackson, Bill Madlock and Ken Griffey, are due to become free agents at the end of the 1981 season, and they presumably would be at liberty to play in an upstart league right away. Slightly less certain is the status of the 420-odd players who haven't yet logged the six years of big league service that, under current procedures, they need to become free agents. Miller is of the firm belief that while such players, among them Fernando Valenzuela, Tim Raines, Rickey Henderson and a host of other young stars, are prohibited from jumping from one team to another, the right of most of them to bolt to a new league would be upheld in court. This leaves only those players, most of them veterans, who, because they're under multi-year contracts, may have to wait until those contracts expire. Thus, Pete Rose might not be free to join a new league until 1984, George Brett until 1987, Dave Winfield until 1991. But even those players, Miller suggests, could possibly be freed by litigation.

One precedent for such a strike-born endeavor is *The New York Review of Books*, which was founded during the 1962 New York newspaper walkout. Another precedent of sorts occurred in 1919 when Hollywood's three biggest stars, Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks and Charlie Chaplin, showed their displeasure with the established studios by starting their own. "The lunatics have taken over the asylum," one movie mogul, Richard Rowland, scoffed at the time, but the company that resulted, United Artists, turned out to be anything but inconsequential. Although a strike-born baseball league would lack the tradition of the existing major leagues, it would enjoy one distinct competitive advantage that even United Artists didn't have. As Miller puts it, "You couldn't replace the tradition of major league baseball overnight, but if it's the only game in town, you never know."

SWIMMERS-IN-LAW

As most accounts of Jerry Pate's two-stroke victory in the Danny Thomas-Memphis Classic duly noted, he and co-runner-up Bruce Lietzke are brothers-in-law. Lietzke married Rose Nelson, the sister of Soozi Nelson Pate, on May 30 of this year in Pensacola, Fla. Although there were no crossed golf clubs for the newlyweds to pass under as they emerged from St. Paul's Catholic Church, there was a spectacle of sorts at the reception when guests threw Lietzke, attired in a white tux and looking for all the world like "The Man from Glad," as usher Ben Crenshaw put it, into a swimming pool. Then Pate, Crenshaw and others followed him into the water. Thus, when Pate celebrated his victory in Memphis by executing his now-famous dive, fully clothed, into a lake near the 18th hole, it was by no means the first such dip of the season among the golfing set. But only Lietzke could claim the distinction of having taken the plunge twice in one day.

CORPORATE EXPANSION

Dallas-based Diamond Shamrock Corporation is a major (1980 sales: $3.14 billion) producer of oil, coal, natural gas and chemicals that keeps a corporate eye peeled on strategically situated real estate. Over the past year, the firm has produced petroleum in Louisiana, Montana and Nebraska, gas in Wyoming and Oregon and coal in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Now, according to the *Dallas Times Herald*, Diamond Shamrock has



shelled out $600,000 for a 16×16-foot piece of real estate that, when first offered for sale in 1968, fetched only $50,000. The property, a glass-enclosed luxury box in Texas Stadium, home of the Cowboys, The company reportedly spent the hefty sum—the highest advertised price for a Texas Stadium box was the $300,000 a seller asked for one two years ago—because the box is located on the 35-yard line, an obvious move up in the world from the leased box on the goal line that Diamond Shamrock's executives were condemned to occupy last season.

OFF TO THE GAME

During the seven days he recently spent on the stand in the big NFL trial in Los Angeles, Oakland Raider boss Al Davis, whose attempt to move his team to L.A. is the main issue in the proceedings, made an interesting assertion. By way of denying that the proposed franchise shift

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would betray the Raiders' longtime fans in the Bay Area, Davis argued that if the move were allowed to take place, those fans could still easily attend Raider games. "If I got on an airplane in Oakland, I could be in Los Angeles at the Coliseum almost as quick as you could do it on a Sunday from Los Angeles to Anaheim," Davis said. Anaheim is where the Rams moved upon departing L.A. last season.

Glenn Dickey, sports columnist for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, felt compelled to comment on Davis' testimony. "Davis is right, of course," Dickey wrote. "It is possible to fly down on a Sunday morning and back that night, after seeing the game. Aside from the damage to your lungs from the smog, here is what that entails:

"• A round-trip airfare of $120. On PSA, that does not include food, nor does it include a seat reservation. You do get a swell opportunity to emulate the atmosphere on a cattle car as you jostle for position prior to boarding.

"• A taxi ride from the airport to Los Angeles Coliseum, which costs about $20 one way, $40 round trip. A rental car would be somewhat cheaper, but not much.

"• With the cost of your ticket, the extras like airport parking, the food you'll have to buy on game day, the total cost is about $200 a game.

"If you attend ten games—eight regular-season and two exhibitions—that comes to about $2,000 for the season, or $4,000 for a couple.

"For that money, you could spend two weeks in Paris, which might be almost as much fun as watching ten football games."

Dickey also mentioned that fans who have been regularly attending Raider games in Oakland might have trouble coming up with comparable seats in Los Angeles. Especially, we would imagine, if all 54,000 of them were to take Davis up on his kind invitation.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

You may recall the concern expressed in this space about the absence of procreative proclivities among the flamingos at Hialeah (SCORECARD, March 30, *et seq.*). No flamingos had been born at Hialeah since 1972, with the result that the flock that resides in the track's infield had declined from more than 600 to barely 400. What's more, male and female birds

continued



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weren't showing much interest in each other. Track officials blamed a court order in 1972 requiring that Hialeah's winter meeting, which traditionally had run from January to early March, be held in alternate years from March through May. Noting that the flamingos normally mated during March, the officials speculated that the birds had been turned off by the galloping horses and the cheering throngs. Then, in mid-April of this year, just as fears were being expressed that the flock might eventually dwindle away, some flamingos began mating.

What happened? Dennis Testa, Hialeah's general supervisor, noted that the outbreak of amorous activity had occurred later than the old mating period, and said, "Maybe they just got used to the racing." Testa also wondered if high-potency carrot-oil extract that had been added to the flamingos' daily fare of, among other things, rice, dry dog food and corn might have had an aphrodisiac effect. Then, too, the birds may have been put in the mood by some heavy rain showers. At any rate, we're happy to report that over the past fortnight, 25 flamingo chicks have hatched at Hialeah. And since at least 20 other eggs have been laid, Hialeah officials are now hoping that more visits from the stork lie ahead.

PUTTING QUARTERS ON THE LINE

The Continental Basketball Association, a minor league partly funded by the NBA, has devised an intriguing approach to season standings that could give players greater incentive to hustle through an entire game instead of, as frequently occurs in the pros, only the final minutes. Starting next season, the CBA will forgo traditional standings based on won-lost records and introduce a system whereby three "points" are awarded for a victory and one point for each quarter in which a team outscores its opponent, with both teams earning one-half point for a quarter in which they tied. The most points a team will be able to earn from a game will be seven—three for winning and four more for outscoring its opponents in every period. At the other extreme, it will be possible for a winning team to receive as few as four points, with the loser picking up three.

If the scheme works the way it's meant to, the attention of fans, coaches and players will be riveted not only on the main scoreboard but also on an auxiliary scoreboard that will provide a running tally of the quarter being played. With the score, say, 20–17 late in the first period, there would, it's hoped, be heightened excitement as both teams battle to "win" the quarter. Strategy could also be affected. For example, instead of routinely resting a player in foul trouble at the close of the third period, the coach might now be tempted to keep him in the game in hopes of gaining one immediate point in the standings.

CBA Commissioner Jim Drucker says that one of the ideas behind the innovation is to make one-sided games more exciting. "Even when the score is 100–72 going into the fourth period, the fans might stick around to see if the losing team can at least salvage a point in the standings by winning the fourth quarter," Drucker says. But Drucker admits that the experiment could have exactly the opposite effect. "The good teams might now win by even bigger scores, because they'd be less likely to suffer emotional letdowns," he says. "But we'll never know if we don't try it, will we?"

SPLASHING RIGHT ALONG

Not content with having won an unprecedented 31 individual national titles (17 indoors, 14 outdoors) and having broken or equaled five world records and 57 American records (15 of which she currently holds), Tracy Caulkins keeps churning along as the top U.S. woman swimmer. Now 18 and bound for the University of Florida in the fall, the 1978 Sullivan Award winner entered nine individual events at the recent *Seventeen* magazine Swim Meet of Champions in Mission Viejo, Calif. and won an astonishing six of them while placing third, fourth and sixth in the others. She also swam on three relay teams, one of them victorious, for her Nashville Aquatic Club. As the women's high-point scorer, Caulkins received a 10-speed bicycle, a bracelet, a warmup suit and a $1,500 scholarship, as well as some handsome additions to her already enormous hoard of trophies, of which she says brightly, "The major ones are around the house, others are in safe places, and others are in boxes." Caulkins took her seven-victory performance in stride, witness her poolside exchange with a fan, who told her, "Nice meet, Tracy." Misunderstanding the well-wisher's words—too much water in the ears?—Caulkins replied, "Nice meeting you, too."

THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT

Little Lee Trevino, all 5′ 7″ of him, appeared at an exhibition match in Kansas City the other day with those relative giants, Jack Nicklaus and Tom Watson, and seized the occasion to claim that taller golfers get a break when it comes to putting. Citing the putting prowess of 6′ 5″ George Archer and also favorably mentioning the skills of Bruce Lietzke, Jerry Pate and Tommy Valentine, all of them 6-footers or thereabouts, Trevino said, "The best putters have always been tall. They can lean over the ball and putt like a pendulum, back and forth. The shorter you are, the more you have to get away from the ball."

Trevino also claimed that taller players are likelier to last longer. "When you're my size, the older you get the more mobility you lose," he said. "You don't have the arc on your swing. When you're in the 29–33 age range you still get the distance, but when you're older you're not as flexible." Trevino noted that while 5′ 7″ Gary Player was, at 45, having his troubles, 51-year-old Don January, a strapping 6-footer, was contending in many tournaments. "He still has the arc and he can play for a long time," said Trevino.

To which Nicklaus, drawing himself to his full 5′ 11″ said, "Hogwash." Big Jack added, "I don't think just because you are 5′ 7″, you're going to lose flexibility. I think [Trevino] just happened to pick this out because he's having some fun with it. I don't think he really believes it."

But the 5′ 9″ Watson said, "Trevino is right. As you get older the golf swing gets flatter and you can't get the club back as far. When you don't have the flexibility to get the club back as far, you can't hit it as far."

THEY SAID IT

- Joe Morgan, San Francisco Giant second baseman, extolling the diplomacy with which Manager Frank Robinson dispenses constructive criticism: "He can step on your shoes, but he doesn't mess up your shine."
- Lance Van Zandt, former Nebraska defensive backfield coach who now holds the same position with the Saints, on New Orleans' drafting of Cornhusker Safety Russell Gary: "The only thing that concerns me about Russell is that he won't get any better coaching in the pros than he got in college." **END**



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Sports Illustrated
JULY 13, 1981



HIS EARTH, HIS REALM, HIS ENGLAND

John McEnroe drew censure—but also gained admiration—as he stopped Bjorn Borg at Wimbledon **by CURRY KIRKPATRICK**

When it finally ended in the gathering greens and grays of a long Fourth of July afternoon, he was alone. Just he and his racket and the ball coming shoulder high on the left. There were no more "incompetent fools" or "disgraces to mankind" in the chair. There were no more "cheats" on the lines. There were no "vultures" in the stands, no "trash" or "liars" in the press box and none of the other abominable demons at this place he called the "the pits of the world," which had visited upon him persecutions, both real and imagined, for an entire fortnight. Now it was only he, reaching out on the forehand and jabbing a volley. When the ball landed smack in the corner, clean and clear where nobody could overrule the call or replay the point or "screw" him or even touch the bounding white rabbit he had so artfully slashed into posterity, he had beaten them all. Most of all, John McEnroe had finally beaten the great Bjorn Borg at Wimbledon. For that he will be remembered long after his outrageous behavior and gutter-snipe quotations are forgotten.

It had taken a thoroughly preposterous six Wimbledons, with Borg winning 41 straight matches, for this moment to arrive. It had taken nearly a lifetime out of Jimmy Connors, who had come oh-so-close to overthrowing the champion in a thrilling semifinal two days earlier. But for the brilliant McEnroe it required merely the experience *continued*

At the moment of victory, McEnroe started to his knees but recalled that had been done the past five years

of contesting last year's final against Borg, with its magnificent 34-point tiebreak—the ultimate warmup—as well as another three hours and 20 minutes last Saturday.

The scores were 4–6, 7–6, 7–6, 6–4, the American lefthander pitching positively Valenzuelan in the clutch tiebreaks, which he won 7–1 and 7–4. When the Centre Court clock struck 5:30 p.m. at the instant the championship changed hands, McEnroe looked to the sky for a moment, transfixed by what he had accomplished. Then he whirled to salute his family in the visitors' box. Brother Mark already had the champagne out.

Along with his unexpected equanimity in the heat of several questionable line calls, the difference in this year's final was the effectiveness of McEnroe's huge sidewinding southpaw first delivery. He connected on 104 of 167 first serves. He won 82—or 79%—of those 104 points but barely half of those that started with his second serve. On the critical points he almost always nailed what Borg called "the big one"—12 times to ward off 13 of 15 break points, nine times out of 10 in the tiebreakers.

"I was surprised that I served so well," McEnroe said. "I wanted to show that Bjorn's not the only one who can come from behind and win. But I can't say if I was mentally tougher."

In fact, on this day McEnroe was indeed tougher. Which might have been the biggest surprise of all considering the commotion of the previous two weeks, during which he exploded at officials, berated spectators, cursed the media, was warned, penalized and fined, more or less confirming the Fleet Street headlines. SHAME OF SUPER BRAT. If the Wimbledon tournament committee has its way, McEnroe will pay a total of $14,750 in fines. He also could face a one-year suspension from tournaments, although punishment of such severity seems unlikely.

McEnroe has disdained Wimbledon since 1977, when, at 18, he reached the semis as a qualifier. Back then he was simply "McNasty." Even before this year's tournament began, McEnroe was grousing that the All England Club meant nothing to him but rain, cold, lousy unrolled courts, unfair scheduling and stuffy people. "The only thing 'championship' about Wimbledon is its prestige," he said. After the tournament started, he took the gloves off.

In a first-round match against Tom Gullikson, McEnroe got into a row—a McEn*row*, of course—with the umpire, demanded to see tournament referee



Fred Hoyles and then four-lettered Hoyles up and down the baseline. Forsooth, the tournament committee was on the verge of defaulting McEnroe. "I've never seen Wimbledon so mad, I mean hurning," said Arthur Ashe. "Not even when Connors insulted the Queen hy not showing up for the centenary celebration in 1977."

Now we're talkin' *mad*.

The subsequent warnings and a $1,500 fine were thought to have tamed McEnroe, but in later appearances on Centre Court he was heard to bellow, "This place stinks, it reeks."

One day the Indian Vijay Amritraj, a spokesman for dignity, was asked about McEnroe's behavior. He replied that if he had to act like McEnroe to win the championship, he wouldn't want it. Very soon Amritraj found himself playing





For two sets Connors jumped all over Borg, but by the fifth set Jimbo barely had a leg to stand on

doubles with his brother, Anand, against McEnroe and Peter Fleming, the eventual champions. McEnroe accused a dark-skinned linesman, who happened to be wearing a turban, of being "biased."

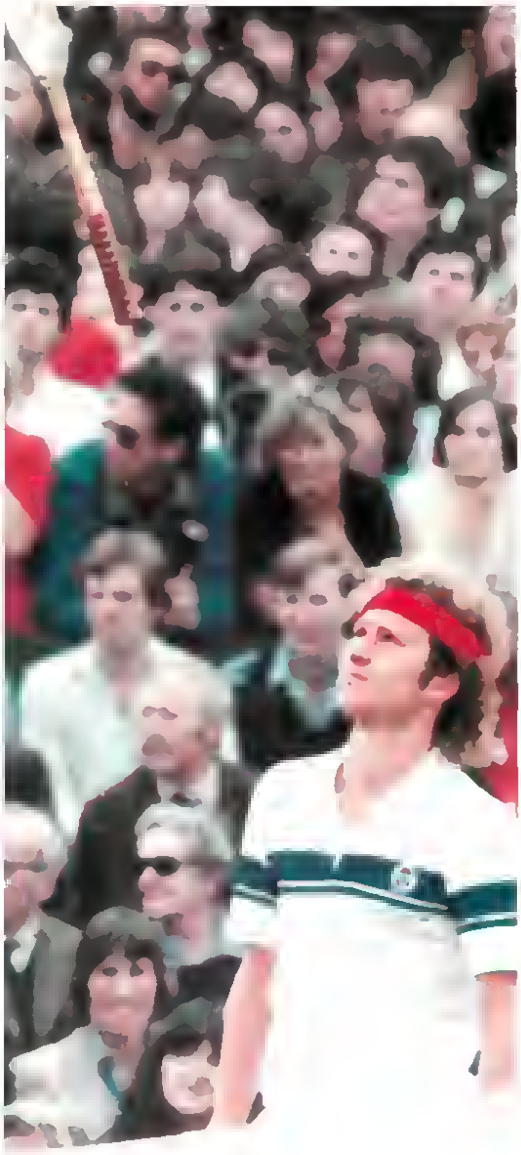
In an awkward, interminable semifinal with the unseeded Australian Rod Frawley, McEnroe was especially irascible, shouting objections to calls as well as assorted unprintables 13 different times before earning another on-court audience with Hoyles. Lady Diana Spencer left the Royal Box during the match. "The wedding's off," someone said. "Her ears are no longer virgin."

Though McEnroe's complaints were undeniably exaggerated and his actions inexcusable, at the core of his running battle was a beef cited by many competitors, namely that Wimbledon is overly regimented and haughty, an antiquated relic. "The root problem is that officials on and off court didn't acknowledge our words or feelings," Fleming said. "It really isn't much fun to play here."

Or sometimes even to *continued*



If Borg could hit this shot—a backhand volley—as well as McEnroe, he might have won title No. 6







Although McEnroe had a dream draw into the finals and dispatched his opponents en route without

WIMBLEDON *continued*

watch. Take the case of former champion Stan Smith's wife, Margie, who was once kicked out of the members' tearoom while sitting with her husband. It didn't matter that, seven months pregnant, Margie needed a rest. She wasn't a member. This year Adriano Panatta telephoned the All England Club to request a delay in his opening match because he had played a final in Venice the day before. According to player association bylaws, he was allowed a postponement in such a situation. Wimbledon defaulted him. Even Frawley, a consummate sportsman, called the officiating "blackmail."

Further uproars came over the treatment accorded Borg, who gets the best match times and who hasn't had to battle the noise, crowd chaos and crazy bounces on the field courts in four years. "To win the title, a guy should have to play under all the conditions," said Connors. What about grunting, Jimbo? Yes, here came another Wimbledon proclamation, this one condemning the filthy, vile, national-security threat of grunting. You know who you are. "Rules, rules," said Connors. "I might as well have been defaulted all my life. We get no consideration here. The players are nothings."

Easily the most bizarre effect of McEnroe's pervading influence on the proceedings came on semifinals day after he had been embroiled in still another yell-off. This time he confronted James Whittaker, a gossip columnist for *The Daily Star* whose usual beat is up the nearest tree where he can spy on Prince Charles with his trusty binoculars. After Whittaker persisted in questioning McEnroe about an alleged tiff with his girl friend, Stacy Margolin, McEnroe called him and the British press in general every name on the bathroom wall and then stormed out of the interview room. A remarkable scene ensued in which the merits of snoop journalism were debated among media reps from several countries, and soon a Brit and a Yank were on the floor engaged in — why, yes, a "punch-up."

Meanwhile, out on Centre Court, Connors, having rallied from two sets behind against Amritraj in the quarters, was roaring about the greensward and belting the daylights out of the ball and Borg, too. Soon it was 6–0, 4–2 Connors. In Set 2, Game 8 the old adversaries played some of the more amazing tennis in Wimbledon memory, rivaling last year's Borg-McEnroe tiebreak. The game lasted 24 points and 19 minutes, Connors wasting six points to hold serve for 5–3, Borg needing five break points to hurtle back into the match at 4–all. Though Connors took the set 6–4, he was hardly the same player thereafter. Borg swept the next two sets 3 and love and kept serving aces (16 altogether) before he and Connors put on the best theater of the tournament in the fifth. "It was great," said an interested third party, McEnroe. "Clay-court tennis on grass." Connors, still the most exciting player in the game, has never played better in defeat. He seldom has played as well in victory.

Game 3: Connors held from 0–40. Game 4: Connors had two break points for 3–1, but Borg boomed two aces to Jimbo's forehand corner in the ad court. Game 5: Connors held from 0–40 once more. Game 7: Connors, at 0–40 yet





much trouble he seethed anguished agonized berated, pouted and jeered every step of the way



again, saved once, twice. Then Borg knifed a medium-pace backhand return cross-court, Connors prepared to come over the ball for a forehand kill, but he changed his mind in mid-swing, let up and sailed the ball deep. 4–3 for Borg. He then held twice to take the set 6–4.

"Pride in extending him? That's crap," said Connors. "You win or you don't." But Connors also said, "He had to play his best stuff to beat me." Borg was to admit later, "Me and Jimmy had an unbelievable match."

On Saturday, though Borg controlled the championship round through a set and a half, his service wasn't sharp. He hit *10* aces, but converted only *55%* of his first serves. Still, McEnroe couldn't pierce the champion's armor until Game 7 of the third set on his *11th* break point of the match. And that came after a long rally in which a McEnroe backhand took a bad bounce and died in the grass as Borg fanned. He walked hangdog to the chair. Did he know this must be the day?

Game 8 was a 12-pointer, but Borg came up empty. Game 10 was an 18-pointer that included The Call. At 15–30 McEnroe's volley to the baseline was called good by the linesman but ruled out by the umpire, leaving McEnroe with two set points against him. He stared, bowed his head and walked away. McEnroe had enough respect for the occasion and too much for Borg to blow up now. "It's too hard to deal with other problems when you're trying to beat *him*," McEnroe was to say. Instead he rallied to deuce behind a pair of first serves. Then came two more set points, and McEnroe responded with two more winners. Four set points in one game, gone. Did Borg know now?

In the second tiebreak, Borg down 4–3 and serving, McEnroe displayed his facile touch, wristing a sensational pass from each wing to reach triple set point. He converted on the second with a lunging drop volley.

In Games 7 and 8 of the fourth set, Borg unleashed his major arsenal—return rockets, sprinting gets, reflex volleys—but the best he could do was stay even. McEnroe's racket was a fishnet now, and he kept catching and flinging Borg's minnows into the vacancies on the lawn. Down 4–5, Borg played three loose points to give McEnroe his first Wimbledon championship point, ever. McEnroe blocked a backhand wide. An overhead gave him a second championship point.

Throughout the tournament, among the nicer things McEnroe screamed at himself was "play like a human being." As he paused for that final volley, as he crunched it home, as he waited for the fallen champion to walk to net and honor his conqueror, how secure McEnroe must have felt knowing that, on one marvelous afternoon at least, he had defeated Bjorn Borg, played like a human being and acted like one as well.

If there were imperfections at Wimbledon, you couldn't prove it by the women, who seemed to be preoccupied in speculating on what Lady Di would be wearing in the Royal Box or quaking in the path of an aroused, avenging Chris Evert Lloyd. Actually, the All England Club can do no wrong on the distaff side. This year their champion even collected more loot than her male counterpart. While the

continued



When Mac was McNasty, Lady Di departed

prize money allotted her was $4,000 less than the $43,000 McEnroe won, she also received a $6,000 pendant from the De Beers diamond people. Well, two women *do* run England. Evert Lloyd, who ended up wearing the diamonds, acknowledged she had been "always in awe of this place." The club, not the country. And she has played 10 Wimbledons. Now, at least part of the time, she lives just down the lane. Neighborhood girl makes good. Or, as the screaming tabloids might put it, WIMBY KISS FOR LOCAL CHRIS.

This was Evert Lloyd's Wimbledon from the beginning. She had lost in the championship round three years in a row, and no tournament beats Chris Evert Lloyd in four straight finals. Then, too, she was coming off that oddest of oddities, a defeat on clay. When Hana Mandlikova, the 19-year-old Czech flamethrower, beat her en route to winning the French Open last month, Evert Lloyd was stung, shaken, near torment. Clay was her home, and Mandlikova had ransacked it. "I told myself that if I played Hana at Wimbledon I would beat her," said Evert Lloyd.

Early on there, Mandlikova was the innocent source of controversy. First, Martina Navratilova, who's ranked third on the computer, as well as Tracy Austin (No. 2) and Andrea Jaeger (No. 4), complained bitterly about Hana's No. 2 seeding. Mandlikova is fifth on the computer. Then some misguided pundits proclaimed that Mandlikova, having won the Australian Open last December, was already halfway to the Grand Slam. Their reasoning was that to win the Slam one only has to win the four major titles consecutively, not all in the same year.

To prevent Hana from becoming a Grand Slamma, Evert Lloyd practiced four hours each day of the tournament with her husband, John, and his coach, Dennis Ralston. They drilled "my behind off," said Lloyd *femme*. She would eat peanut butter sandwiches and work crossword puzzles in the car on the way to her matches. At night her mother, Colette, would cook at the Lloyds' apartment. "I feel so relaxed," Chris said. "This Wimbledon is . . . so *family*." It was also . . . so easy. She dropped but 26 games in the entire tournament.

Meanwhile, the teen-age Evert Lloyd clones were conveniently being dispatched back to the factory for repairs. Kathy Rinaldi, 14, the youngest competitor at Wimbledon since the Edwardian era, lost two love sets to Claudia Pasquale from, you guessed it, Switzerland. Jaeger, 16, was upset by the veteran chubette, Mima Jausovec.

Then there was Austin, 18. Tracy Austin 18? *Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away.* "I can't believe this is my fifth Wimbledon," she said. "I feel like a pioneer." In truth, Austin was an outpatient. Out of action for five months with an inflamed sciatic nerve, she had returned to the circuit with a victory at Eastbourne. But that was false security. Austin hadn't been challenged, was not match-tough. When she arrived in the quarters, who should be waiting but her personal pigeon, Pam Shriver, 0–11 lifetime against Austin. Now she's 1–11.

The 6-foot Shriver used to call Austin "that little twerp," and then die like a dog in their matches. This time— "playing with my brain, not my mouth," Shriver said—Pam pounded her big serve and attacked Austin's lollipop deliveries with chip returns. Time and again Austin missed her hole card, the backhand pass. She was slow getting to the ball and not connecting solidly. She looked nervous



Mandlikova lived up to her controversial No. 2 billing, but she was no match for Evert Lloyd

but she called it "complacency." On one changeover Austin filed her nails.

After prevailing 7–5, 6–4, Shriver said, "This was a perfect match if I ever had it. Now we'll see if I can put together two in a row." Because she couldn't—Evert Lloyd won their semifinal 6–3, 6–1 without smearing her eye shadow—it was left to the Mandlikova-Navratilova headband championship of Czechoslovakia to determine a worthy opponent for Chris.

The stately, beguiling Mandlikova is obviously the next mega-star of women's sports. No less an authority than Ginger Rogers, a Wimbledon spectator, said Mandlikova has "the most beautiful legs I've ever seen." Yet in this match she was made to appear unattractive by both the nature and the pace of play. Rallies? Two or three shots, max. It was all groaning serve-and-volley stuff with both women rushing along—Mandlikova-Navratilova, red rova-hurryonova—as if they had 24 seconds to shoot.

Navratilova had been wrestling with an errant toss all tournament, and finally, in the third set, her first serve fell apart. In Game 4 a careless volley gave her opponent break point, and Mandlikova cashed in with a backhand return winner off a second serve. Leading 3–1, 30–all, Mandlikova footfaulted. She asked the linesman, left or right foot? He said back foot. "I don't understand," Mandlikova said later. "I don't have back foot." But she had spunk. After the ruling she won 11 of the last 13 points to close out the match 7–5, 4–6, 6–1.

Ralston was so impressed with Evert Lloyd's warmup the morning of the final he said if Mandlikova wasn't at her best the match would be a "slaughter." As nervous as Evert Lloyd was, she knew Mandlikova would be a "wreck." In the changing room Mandlikova asked Evert Lloyd about a picture on the wall. It was a shot of Mo Connolly. Mandlikova said she had never heard of her. Evert Lloyd thought, "My God, this girl *is* young."

And not yet ready. Mandlikova's plan was simple. Bring Evert Lloyd in with drop shots and then lob or pass. In the second game three drops earned Mandlikova two break points, but she was wide with a backhand on one and Evert Lloyd passed her on the other. In the next game Mandlikova double-faulted three times, and that turned out to be the ball game.

Mixing speeds on delivery and converting 41 of 51 first serves, Evert Lloyd kept Mandlikova off-balance. Often Chris had only to wait for Hana to embarrass herself. Set 1, Game 8. She twice hit wide of the doubles alley and then dumped a drop shot at her own service line to fall behind 6–2. Set 2, Game 5: Mandlikova double-faulted twice and bunted another horrendous drop outside the alley. At the end of the 6–2, 6–2 rout Mandlikova said, "I sink I *should* be nervous here first time in final."

While that's true, talent alone never wins Wimbledon. Head, guts, mental toughness, determination, they all count. Nobody was going to take this title from Evert Lloyd. "When I'm determined," she said, "I'm still the best."

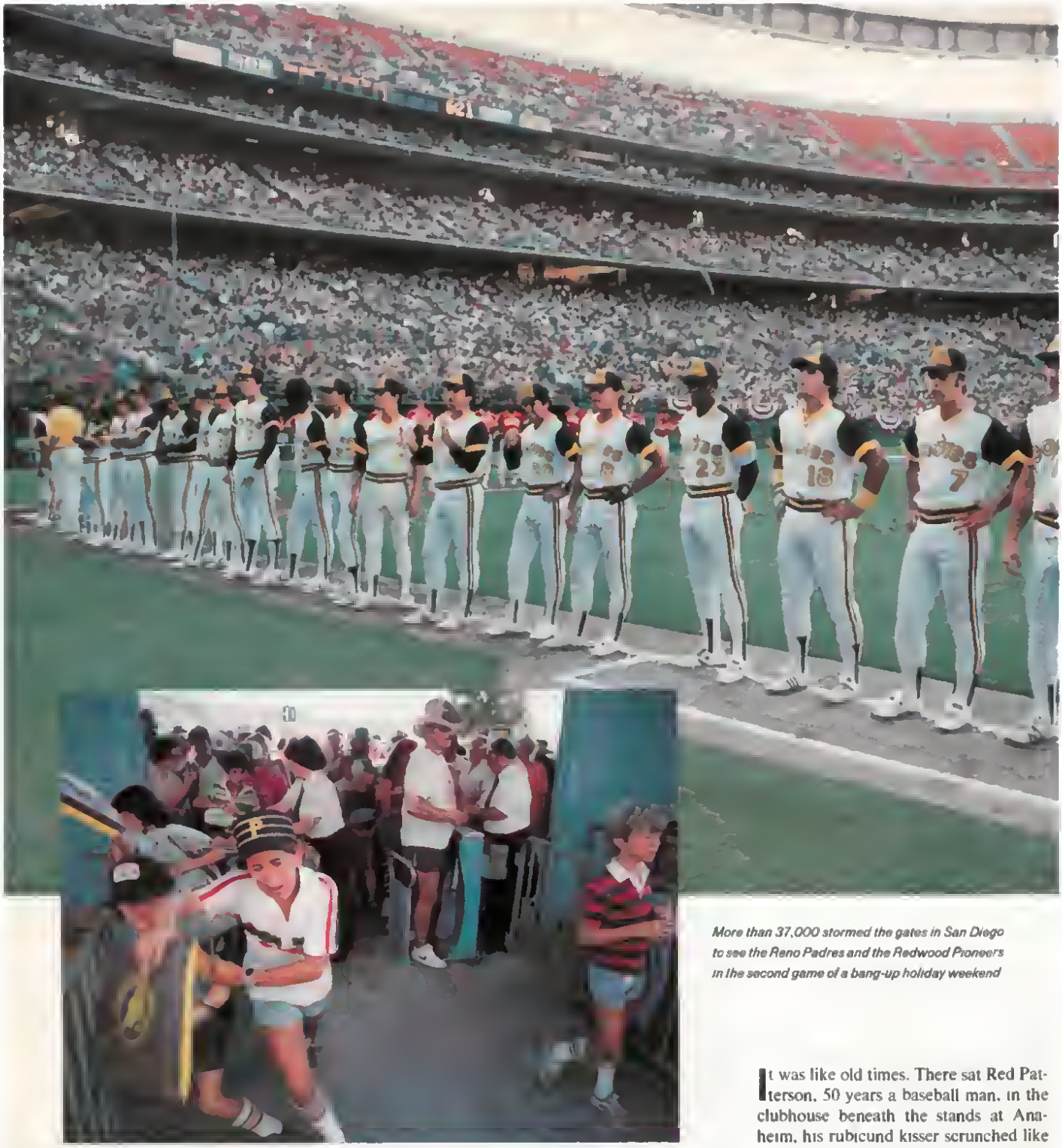
Just as she wavered on court, Mandlikova struggled to describe what the new champion symbolized for her. "I sink," she began in her delightfully fractured English, "Chris is the most toughest, difficult to play. . . . I sink most nicest. For all players . . . I sink she is best we never had in the world."

Nobody in the whole world would call McEnroe the most nicest male. But the most toughest? Last week he was. **END**





Chris worked long and hard on movement, and at times her feet didn't even touch the ground



More than 37,000 stormed the gates in San Diego to see the Reno Padres and the Redwood Pioneers in the second game of a bang-up holiday weekend

BASEBALL COMES BACK TO THE BIG TIME

The turnstiles were clicking and the fans were cheering as players took the field at two major league stadiums last week **by RON FIMRITE**

It was like old times. There sat Red Patterson, 50 years a baseball man, in the clubhouse beneath the stands at Anaheim, his rubicund kisser scrunched like a stewed tomato, asking all about him why in the name of Marvin Grebey, or whoever, a bus driver carrying the umpires' equipment should disappear for dinner only an hour before game time. The players were on the field and the fans in the seats. Where the blazes was that bussy? Ah, here he came now. And there in the sun-baked parking lot outside San Diego Jack Murphy Stadium



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDY HAYT

gamboled legions of the Southern California undressed, sipping beer, sailing Frisbees, warming up in the heat for the ball game within. What a day this one would be. And there. . .

Hold it a darn minute. What ball game? The players are on strike, dummy. How could there be games at the Big-A and in San Diego? Well, last Friday and Saturday nights, on the weekend of the Glorious Fourth, usually baseball's most profitable (1,137,161 attended major league games a year ago), there were games at these two stadiums—minor league games between a pair of Class A California League teams. The one on Friday night in Anaheim was the first between professional teams in a big league ball park since the players struck on June 12. With minimal promotion, 9,556 fans turned out to watch the fourth-place Reno Padres, a San Diego farm team, and the seventh-place Redwood Pioneers of Rohnert Park, Calif., an Angels affiliate. Granted, many on hand considered the ball game—won by Reno 2–1—incidental to the fireworks show afterward, but there were plenty more who were there, as fan Alan Levine of Fullerton exclaimed, "because we miss baseball, that's why."

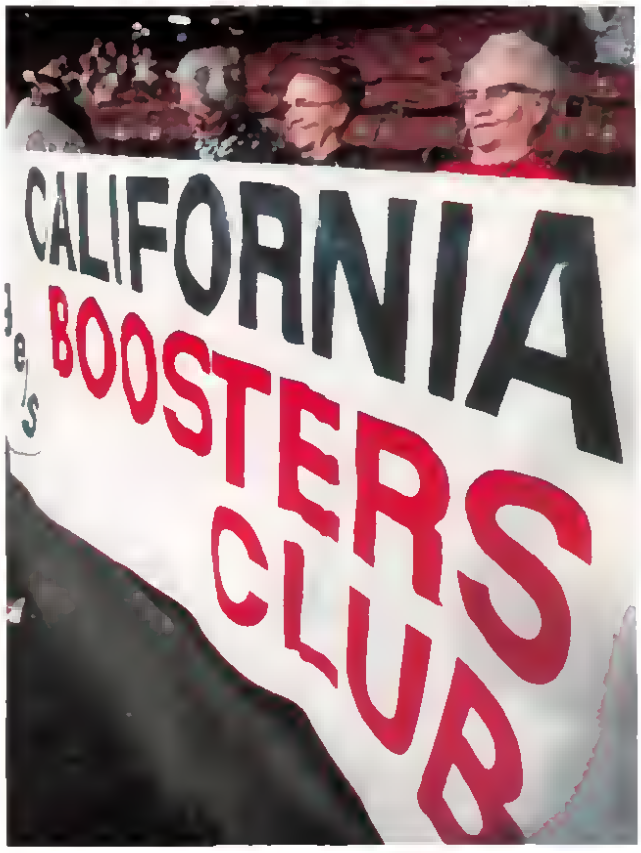
Now for the truly extraordinary development. The next night, when these same two lower minor league teams, staffed by tyros barely out of or not quite out of their teens, traveled to San Diego, 37,665 fans showed up. As their constant cheering throughout a surprisingly good game demonstrated, they weren't there to sit on their hands until the postgame Roman candles were launched. It need not be appended that the crowd was the largest ever to see a Class A baseball game.

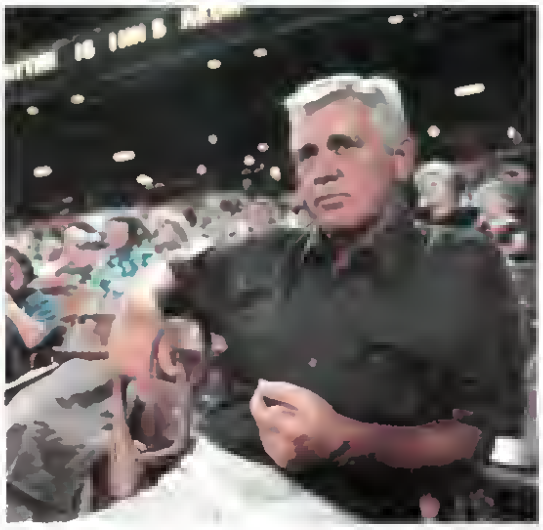
Credit the Padres and the Angels for establishing, albeit inadvertently, that if you've got the only game in town, someone will come out to watch it. Actually, both clubs only wanted a semi-windup for their fireworks main events and didn't quite know what to expect from a deprived fandom. The Padres had been broadcasting "fantasy" games over their radio station, KFMB, and had foreordained that on the Fourth, following a 23-game winning streak, San Diego would move into first place in the National League West. Now if that isn't fantasy, then the Brothers Grimm are courtroom stenographers. Meanwhile, Patterson, who as a public-relations man for the old Yankees and Dodgers introduced such gimmicks as Oldtimers' Games and yearbooks, was bemoaning a baseball-less Fourth from his present eminence as assistant to Angels Chairman of the Board Gene Autry. "I came up with the idea that we should bring in a Little League team, a semipro bunch, anybody," he said.

As fate would have it, the Angels' and Padres' Class A farm teams were scheduled to meet that very Independence Day weekend in Reno. It required little persuasion from the parent organizations to convince the minor-leaguers that their games should be transferred to the big parks on Friday and Saturday. The Padres and the Angels would split the cost—about $18,000—of transporting and housing the teams and reimbursing the Reno club for its loss of home-game revenue. Previous efforts to have minor-leaguers play in big league parks had been thwarted by the striking Players Association. The other promoters had simply not sunk low enough, calculating that fans in big league cities wouldn't *continued*



Until the Big A reopened, kids and little old ladies (from Pasadena?) were without baseball





Angel Manager Mauch was one of 9,556 spectators who got a needed baseball fix on Friday night

BASEBALL *continued*

pay to see players any further down on the evolutionary scale than Triple A. The trouble was that many Triple A players are carried on the major league 40-man rosters and, as such, are forbidden to use major league facilities during the strike. No one on either the Reno or Redwood team is listed on a 40-man roster. And so, despite rumors of picketing, no objections to the game were forthcoming from the strikers. In fact, one of them, the Dodgers' Rick Monday, attended the Friday night game in his new capacity as an L.A. television reporter.

The real winners in all of this, besides the fans, were the minor-leaguers themselves. "We first heard about it a week ago while we were on a bus to Rohnert Park," said Reno Second Baseman Steve Garcia, who is 20 and in his first full year of professional baseball. "It was a six-hour ride and you should have heard the yelling and screaming. It's incredible. I just can't believe I'm here." "It's the greatest thrill of my life," said Reno Catcher Mike Martin, 22. "I walked into the park not imagining anything could be that big. I never dreamed of anything like this."

For many of the players, last weekend's games will be their last in a big league park, a sobering fact of life all too apparent to such as Reno Manager Jack Maloof, who is himself only 32. Maloof was as impressed as his players with the 65,158-capacity Anaheim Stadium and the 51,362-seat Jack Murphy Stadium, for he never played an inning of major league baseball in his relatively brief professional career. "I was the last man cut by Gene Mauch at Minnesota in 1976," Maloof recalled. "Mauch told me he'd cut me to keep Tony Oliva. I believed him."

"You can ask him about that now if you like," said Jack McKeon, the Padre director of baseball operations. "Here he comes." And indeed, Mauch, who now manages the Angels, was descending the staircase to his box seat behind the Reno dugout, looking, with his silver hair, very managerial. "I always admired that man," said Maloof, as if fearful that his mild complaint might have been overheard.

Chris Cannizzaro, the Redwood manager, spent 13 seasons in the big leagues, most of them as a backup catcher, although in 1969 he was the first All-Star Game selectee in Padre history. He's eager to return now to the big time as a field boss. "I'd like to get my shot," he said, mopping his expanding brow after hitting infield practice to his young charges, some of whom nearly beaned him with their throws home.

The two teams were to fly as one on the Padres' charter from Reno, but the weight of their combined equipment and luggage was too much, so 10 players, some from each team, and two umpires were bumped onto a commercial flight. Air travel is, of course, unheard of in the lower minors, and eight of the neophyte passengers got airsick en route to Anaheim. One of them, Reno Shortstop Randy Kaczmarski, 22, missed the first game because of lingering queasiness. Reno Relief Pitcher Mike Coucheé, 23, was well enough to earn a save in the game, but his nose started bleeding before the last out. Was the rarefied air of a big league park too much for him? "No, it was the heat," he said. "My nose always bleeds when it's too hot."

It was more than 90° at game time Friday, but save for Coucheé's bloody nose, the weather and the strange surroundings had little influence on what proved to be a skillfully played game. Ron Romanick, 20, yielded three hits in seven innings for the Pioneers but lost when Reno Rightfielder Joe Scherger, 23, tripled home two runs in the seventh inning.

Not everyone in Anaheim knew for certain which team to pull for. Janet Dunn of Santa Ana didn't learn that Redwood was an Angel farm team until the seventh inning. "I've been rooting for the wrong team," she said with alarm on hearing the news. "I thought the Padres were the California team. I didn't know where the Pioneer Redwoods were from."

San Diego pulled out all the stops the next night. The Padres transformed their parking lot into something resembling a county fairground. About seven tons of watermelon—the gift of the Ace Auto

continued



Redwood's Matt Gundelfinger slid and Reno's Randy Kaczmarski pivoted, the right plays in any league


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With The Chicken performing once again in his old San Diego roost, there was all kinds of fowl play

Parks company—were passed out free over tables in Lot E, while nearby, free Coca-Cola was served from 196 five-gallon tanks. Disc jockeys Mac Hudson and Joe Bauer held forth from KFMB microphones just northeast of the melon and Coke stands, needling the fans and, in one instance, biting a hand that has fed their station. After extolling the myriad goodies, Hudson wryly observed, "But the important thing is that you'll be seeing good baseball between two hustling teams—something new and exciting for those of us who've been watching the Padres all year."

Tickets for the game sold for a dollar—the Angels had charged the full price, $2.50 to $5.50—and with each ticket came a free spaghetti dinner at one of the Square Pan pizza parlors. Seat cushions, courtesy of San Diego Trust & Savings Bank, were handed out to the first 15,000 customers. Any profit enjoyed by the Padres was to go to the Special Olympics and the Alcoholic Olympics. After a show by a Navy flag team, the teams took the field at 6:30 p.m., an hour when the skies were still blue, the temperature in the 70s and the view of rolling hills and the distant Cowles Mountain brilliantly clear. It was a fine night, and the gift-laden crowd was in vocal good humor. The appearance of The Chicken in the third inning only added to the general buoyancy. The "home team" lost 2–0, in an errorless game that required just one hour and 58 minutes to play. The crowd cheered both teams at the finish, not so much for the brevity of their performance as out of gratitude for their presence.

Monday had said before the game that he welcomed the minor-leaguers because now the fans would have a chance to see the difference between major league and Class A baseball. The press box consensus was that only the most discerning fan would have been able to make that distinction after this game.

Fans interviewed at random both nights said that though the fireworks were surely an attraction, they had come to see some baseball for a change. There were ominous signs of mounting impatience among them. "We've come out tonight to watch guys who really want to play baseball," said Bill Johnson, 19, sarcastically, from his upper-deck seat at the Big-A. "It's a sad state when grown men have a whole year and can't get their act together," said Neil Ginsberg, 29. "We're hard up for baseball," said John Ritter, a 29-year-old San Diego house painter, during a parking-lot feast. "Under the circumstances, I'd rather see a minor league game," said Bruce Cornett, 25, an engineer from La Mesa. "The major-leaguers are too big for their britches." "I don't go to football games because I can't afford it," said David Gose, 36, a retired Navy Chief Petty Officer, at Jack Murphy. "Baseball is still reasonable, but if it keeps going the way it is, I'm sure that after the strike, the teams'll lose a lot of the kind of people who are here tonight." "These kids are playing hellaciously good ball down there," said Stan Dowda, 43, another retired Navy man, with a yellow cap emblazoned REDNECK. "I've really missed baseball. The answer is to get rid of Grebey and Miller."

As if the game weren't enough, the Padres also provided watermelon, Cokes and fireworks—all free



Maybe. Everyone seems to want to get rid of somebody. The players, as even they expected, have emerged as the black hats in the eyes of many fans. Their huge salaries are too much of a handicap on the public-relations front, no matter what the strike issues are, and most fans aren't concerned with the issues, only with the fact that they have no baseball. But if conclusions can be drawn from the cheering evidence of last weekend, the fans, victims though they are of baseball's battles, will come back. They'll come back grumbling, but they'll be back. It's the nature of the beast, a blessing and a curse. **END**

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN HUEHNERGARTH



Culture shock gained a whole new dimension when Cale Yarborough revved up his stock car at Le Mans

by ***BOB OTTUM***

HECK, MES AMIS, IT'S ONLY OL' CALE

DEAR DIARY:

First thing, it's important to establish that Cale couldn't help crashing the car. The brakes went blooey coming around that corner and the only safe spot to spin it out was blocked by 30 or so folks standing around eating *jambon* sandwiches and drinking red wine. So he stuck it in the fence. And it was a dandy—the nose of the Chevy Camaro was slammed so far underneath the guardrail that 15 of those Frenchmen all pulling on a rope couldn't snake it back out. That was the first pity of it all, because until then France was experiencing maybe the most unusual sight and certainly the wildest sound in all the 49 years of the 24 Hours of Le Mans. It was a good old American stock car in there with the sporties, an outlaw car creating a hammering roar that can only be called iron thunder.

The real pity is that Cale Yarborough, at 41, had turned out to be a natural for that course. Right at the start he had cranked the Camaro down the Mulsanne Straight at about 210 mph—that's two *hundred* and some miles an hour—and had pulled back in to allow, "Well, I didn't come over here to poke around; I could be back on the farm, poking around on my combine."

And, of course, that's when the whole crew began to get excited and the tensions started to build, because, up until then, nobody had really figured that any of this could work. Even the cynical old-timers were getting caught up in it and then, when. .

But wait. This is getting ahead of the story, and the best thing to do is to take it from the beginning and tell it straight. It's a sort of saga; it could be called A Yankee Goes to Le Mans.

"*Wait* a minute," Cale says. "You mean A Rebel Goes to Le Mans."

Well, either way.

TUESDAY MORNING, June 9, 1981

They make an arresting tableau, an island surrounded by all the urbane, continental types who are swirling through the terminal at Orly airport outside Paris. There are Cale and Betty Jo Yarborough and their three daughters, Julie, 18, Kelley, 12, and B.J., 10. All of them are wary, and they're circled protectively around two shopping carts that are piled high with luggage. The most conspicuous items on the carts are the red and white Winston Cup championship garment bags with the stickers that picture a racing stock car. The stickers say CALE YARBOROUGH, NASCAR THREE-TIME WORLD CHAMPION, 1976-77-78.

Things are not going well. Everyone is stiff and creaky after the overnight flight from New York—and now Pan Am has lost Betty Jo's suitcase. Among other essentials, it contains comfortable shoes and her four favorite nighties. Little B.J. has to go to the bathroom, but she's blamed if she'll speak to any strangers. The folks around here look pretty hostile, or at least aloof. They do that in France; the French are famous for it: They see you looking forlorn and they stick it to you. Bill Brodrick, the P R guy for the racing team, had promised to meet them, but he hasn't shown. (It turned out that Brodrick, 6′ 5″ and 240 pounds—plus another 20 or 30 pounds



When Yarborough flipped the ignition switch a sound like iron thunder smote the French

of neck chains, gold rings and other jewelry—spent the entire day trying to wrestle the spare parts for the race car out of several tag teams of customs agents. "*But you do not have ze propaire papairs, monsieur.*")

Betty Jo is a brightly pretty woman, a former high school cheerleader who has matured gracefully, and she can be fiercely determined. Her South Carolina accent is a wonder; it is so purely whipped cream and honey that it turns heads when she speaks. As with many people who don't speak a foreign language, she has the vague feeling that one will be understood if one just speaks more slowly to the natives, as if to a backward child. "What ah said was," she says to a uniformed passerby who appears to be a French army general, "what ah *said* was: Surely yew-all have a ladies room around

continued

heah?" The W.C. is pointed out and she sweeps up her daughters and marches off in triumph.

Cale is absolutely unflappable, even slightly amused by all this. He has never been to France but he has been in a lot of tough spots, and anybody who has been upside down at Atlanta or Darlington a time or two isn't going to be rattled by a little French disdain. "Listen," he says to the diary-keeper, "you know how to get to Le Mans?" He even uses the French pronunciation: LuhMahn.

"Umm. I know it's somewhere southwest of Paris."

Cale had arranged for an Avis rental car—a Peugeot station wagon, the biggest car they offered but still only about two-thirds the size of Cale's Grand National stocker. We leave Betty Jo and the girls encircling the luggage and wander off to find the station wagon; the process involves a complicated switch of terminals. The Avis lady is not about to produce any upsets at this time in the morning: She's just as snotty as everybody else. The wagon is over there in the lot, she says, with a vague wave of the hand.

"Uh, Miss? Excuse me. How do you get to Le Mans?"

"*Allez sud*," she says.

The family and luggage are piled into the wagon. There's a road map of France in the glove compartment. Um, let's see, it looks like there's some sort of, you know, like a beltway, around Paris. And then you catch good old A-11 and. . . .

"You read any French?" Cale asks.

"Well, uh, not much. Maybe enough to order ham and cheese and stuff. *Poulet* means chicken, you know."

"Sounds fine to me." And the ex-world stock-car racing champion slips behind the wheel of the Peugeot and fires it up. "I'll tell you what. You read and I'll drive."

WEDNESDAY MORNING, June 10

The Camaro looks as if it might have been picked up from some raggedy-pants U.S. trackside and plopped right down in the infield paddock at Le Mans, smack in among the sleek Lolas and glittering Ferraris and some Porsche prototypes so functionally streamlined that they look like horizontal teardrops. Spectators and other drivers are strolling around to look at the Camaro. There is a great deal of Gallic shrugging and rolling of eyes. The car is, um, how you say. . . .

Hurley Haywood, the card-carrying preppy sports-car and road racer from Jacksonville, Fla., has a word for it. "Junk," he says scornfully.

Haywood's absolutely right, but in a shallow way; too many European and sporty-car types fail to see the difference between junk and creative junk—the very cars that made stock-car racing great and made bootlegging a major art form in the U.S. southland.

This Camaro is a pure, direct descendant of a long racing line; it's squatty and wide-shouldered and its nose is down and its tail is up. All worthy U.S. stock cars look crooked; it's part of their rakish charm. Everybody knows you're not supposed to look at one directly; you stand off to one side and squint at it in bright sunlight, your head tilted a bit, and everything becomes clear. Cale's Camaro weighs 2,351 pounds and has a 350-cubic-inch engine that's been bored out to 393 cubic inches, and it'll pound out 600 horsepower. The body sits on an "outlaw" frame; that is, a 108-inch chassis designed for small, backwoods U.S. racetracks—and that's the trick that has gotten it into Le Mans in its GTO category, right in there with the BMWs and other good stuff, all of which come up to about the door handles of Cale's car. It's a real stock car, and the only things on it that ever saw a Camaro production line are the taillights.

"It could have been a Pontiac Firebird or an almost-whatever-you-want," says Billy Hagan, who owns the car and is financing this whole adventure. "But we chose Camaro because we can get plastic body panels for replacements in case we smash something up."

At 49, Hagan is mustached and seamed and grizzled, a Louisianian who made a fortune in the oil business. His company does stratigraphic readings for drillers—Billy Hagan can tell them if they're going to strike oil before they get there. And now he lavishes money on auto racing. He owns and campaigns a car on the

continued



Cale put down the number of his car, not his years, and was judged fit to race

See you later, alligator.



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Grand National circuit (seventh in the standings at the moment), and he hits the road- and endurance-racing circuit with his Camaro. As for Le Mans, "This is about a $200,000 trip for me," he says. "Figure about $60,000 for the car, another $30,000 in spare engines, and maybe $60,000 in expenses for the crew and hotels and meals and all. Now, for just a little bit more money, I could have bought me a Porsche or something fancy. But I want this to be an All-American operation with all by-God U.S. equipment."

Junk, indeed. Hagan shrugs and looks down at his battered cowboy boots. "This year we're gonna learn how they do this thing at Le Mans," he says. "It's tricky. They tend to make it awful tough on strangers. But next year I'm comin' back here with *two* cars and I'll blow their damn doors off." He nods toward his star driver, who is walking around the Camaro, really seeing it up close for the first time. "We were very lucky to sign Cale; that makes all the difference," Hagan says. "We got to show these folks over here that we mean bidness. Cale gives this operation credibility."

The Yarboroughs have been billeted in a 16th-century chateau, one of the most beautiful in all of France. The castle, as the kids call it, is Chateau de Vizé overlooking a village called Vire, and the owners, Colonel and Mme. Jean Launay, also own 600 acres around it. The chateau, which has been painstakingly restored, has its own private chapel and dungeon, and the furnishings are authentic and expensive and rare.

Madame Launay is a handsome and imperious woman, and she is not at all keen on having guests. But the town fathers of Le Mans prevail on her to take in a celebrity now and then so that the visitors can enjoy the full flavor of rural France.

Well, if one must. But . . . Mr. and Mrs. Cale Yarborough and three kids from Timmonsville, South *Carolina*?

Coolly, Madame Launay shows them around the chateau, drawn to her full height, with her hands folded at her waist. Little B.J. looks up at her with absolute awe. And back in the giant main hall, Betty Jo looks around and says, "I swear, there sure is a lot of French Provincial furniture in here, isn't there?" She turns to a friend and adds, "But then, I guess that figures, doesn't it?"



At first Madame Launay just didn't cotton to hosting the Yarboroughs

Madame Launay sighs and looks at the ceiling.

The instructions and warnings at the drivers' meeting are spooky:

Slower cars are required to stay to the right on the Mulsanne Straight. Use your rearview mirror at all times.

A yellow flag with red stripes means that it's raining somewhere on the course—after all, the circuit is 8.36 miles around. Part of the course runs through a dark wood and parts of it are on public highways that have been closed to normal traffic for the occasion. The flag could also mean there's oil or gravel somewhere on the course.

Hold the pit speeds down to about 50 mph. The pit lane is very narrow; try not to run over any fingers and toes.

Cale sits calmly, with his muscular arms folded. He wears a sports shirt and jeans, plus tan cowboy boots with CALE stitched in a script of raised dark brown leather across the toes, and a big belt buckle, about the size of a salad plate. It's the solid silver and gold Winston Cup NASCAR championship belt.

The drivers will start their first practice session in a few hours. So far, all Cale has done is sit in the bare metal cockpit of the Camaro and shake the steering wheel a bit. The car has no niceties—no carpeting, no padding—just a tachometer, two oil gauges, water, fuel and amp gauges, and a fire extinguisher. "It'll do just fine," Cale says. "It's not absolutely right, but, hell, it's only 24 hours and anybody can stand that."

Now a race official reads the names of drivers who haven't had physicals. The stewards are irritated because this vital item hasn't been completed. No physical exam, no race driving. The name Yarborough is read, with the *r*'s rolled so that it sounds especially elegant and foreign.

Then the meeting breaks up and, at the infield medical tent, the doctor looks for Cale's name on his list of drivers.

"It's not here," he says. "Your name."

continued

Cale checks the list. "Yer right," he says.

"Write it down for me," the doctor says. He tears off a little scrap of paper.

Cale bends over the desk and carefully prints out his name in block letters.

"Fine," the doctor says. "Now the, uh, the number, please." He means Cale's age.

Yarborough leans over and prints out "35," which is the number of the Camaro.

"Thank you," says the doctor. "That will be all."

"Best racing physical I ever had," Cale says outside the tent. "Just makes me feel good all over to know that I'm in such fine condition."

The drivers are permitted just two practice sessions, on Wednesday and Thursday evenings, timed so they'll stretch from daylight into twilight into darkness. Strangely, the practice also doubles as qualifying. The problem with this system is obvious: it creates pressure to get out and hammer the car right away instead of shaking it down sensibly. "I got to remind myself," says Cale, "that this here is a *ride*, not a race. That is, the main thing is, we got to keep that Camaro rolling for 24 hours."

He climbs in through the car window, stock-car style, although the Camaro has a functional door. Chief Mechanic Tex Powell leans in with last-minute instructions. Powell has crewed with some of the best racers in the game, Richard Petty and guys like that, and it was Powell who got the car race-ready at his shop in Asheboro, N.C. Tex is a racing purist; he finds the Le Mans operation a little too slapdash, but he's philosophical about it. "We just do the best we can and let the rough end drag," he says.

With the hotted-up engine, Powell figures the Camaro will get four miles to the gallon at best—or burn perhaps two gallons per lap. "Now, ever' chance you get," he says to Cale, "breathe her a little bit." In other words, ease off on the throttle from time to time so the engine can catch its breath and cool down. Cale nods and pulls on his driving gloves. Then he flicks on the ignition switch. And suddenly, there it is—the sound that shook Le Mans.

There's a heavy cough followed by a huge barr*roooooom*! and the roar of it spills out on all sides. In the pits nearby, mechanics and drivers stiffen in momentary alarm, then turn to look at the Camaro. It sits there bubbling mightily, going *hoodin, hoodin, hoodin, blam, blam, blam*. Then Cale pops the clutch and it screams away, trailing pale blue smoke from the tires.

His first lap takes 6:33 minutes, second lap, 6:45—"Doggone circuit is so long that by the time you come around once you plumb forgot where to go next time." But now, flashing past the pits on the uphill main straight, Cale hunches up his shoulders and gets on it. The speed climbs dramatically and his next laps are 4:51, then 4:21. That means he's averaging better than 115 mph and hitting 200 or so down the 3¾-mile Mulsanne Straight. Next time around, the car comes burbling up the pit road at about the required 50 and slams to a stop.

Now *this* looks like old-time racing: The inside of the cockpit is coated with spattered hot oil, and Cale's face and goggles shine with it. When he grins, his teeth look whiter against the grime. "I swear," he says. "You know that long, long straightaway—the part that's actually the state highway goin' into the town of Mulsanne? Well, there's a *hotel* down there with a patio right next to the guardrail. People sitting at little round tables under big umbrellas and all. And you go past there at 200-and-something miles an hour, just inches from their noses, and they raise a toast to you. It's really something to see. It sure must make some whitecaps in their wineglasses."



Cale's Chevy Camaro elicited a great deal of Gallic shrugging and rolling of eyes

FRIDAY MORNING, June 12

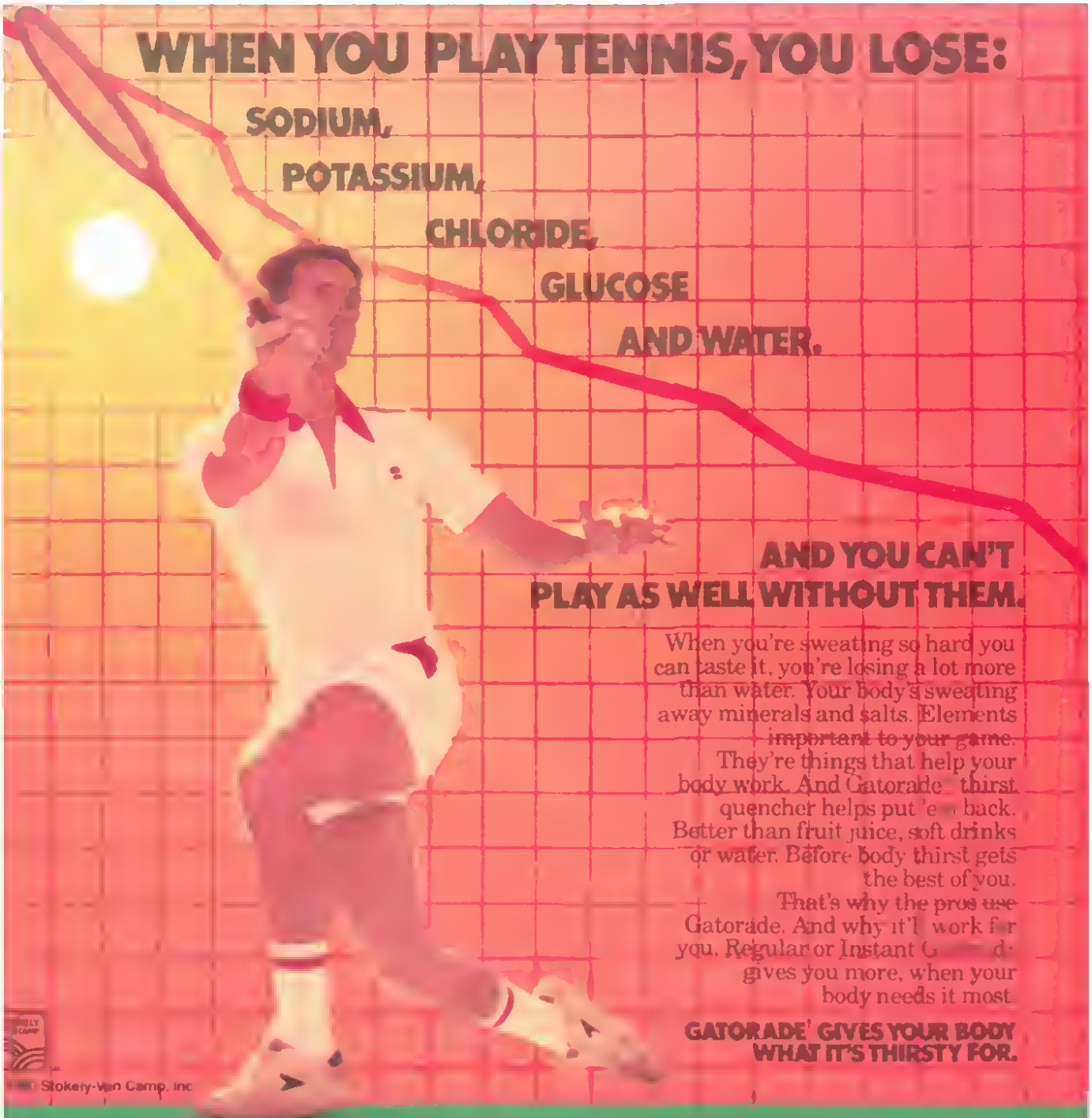
Something strange has happened to Madame Launay.

She is sitting in the sun on the chateau terrace, impeccably groomed, as ever, *mais alors!*, she is smiling hugely. She is surrounded by the Yarborough

continued

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girls and Southern gentility has struck again. Julie. Kelley (the family pronounces it Cale-ee) and B.J. are gracious-mannered and extremely soft-spoken; each one of them can murmur a phrase like "yes, ma'am," and get about six syllables out of it. They have now seized control of the chateau. And B.J. is full of historic news.

"The madame tole me that a knot once owned this castle and that they fought real wars over it and all," she says.

"Oh, really? A . . . a knot?"

She nods brightly. "Uh-huh. You know, knots in shining armor and all like that."

"Oh. A knight."

"That's what ah said," she says—and Madame Launay nods approvingly. That's what the little girl said, *mais oui.* You do not understand *ze* English?

SATURDAY, June 13

It's Race Day, and the Camaro will start in 39th spot on the grid. Fifty-five cars will race—from 3 o'clock this afternoon until 3 o'clock tomorrow—and now they're all parked in a long, long row in front of the main grandstands. A crowd estimated at around 200,000 is on hand, and the air is rich with the smells of gasoline and exhaust fumes, mingled with the odors of heavy red wines and overripe cheeses and Grand Marnier crepes sizzling in the infield concession stands. The noise level is rising, and by now the Americans are excited. They shouldn't be—they're all pros—but they are. A few moments ago, the loudspeaker played *The Star-Spangled Banner* in honor of this one little old Camaro—nobody paid any attention but the raggedy U.S. pit crew, of course—and now the band is playing *La Marseillaise.* The crew gathers around the car, grinning into the stands. An American flag had been flying from a standard taped to the side of the Camaro, but now it is down and draped across the hood.

Cale's isn't really too bad a starting spot. On the second night of practice-qualifying, the team had started to show its stuff. Cale's backup and co-drivers had been out: Bill Cooper, 34, an instructor at Bob Bondurant's race-driver school in California; Bobby Mitchell, 39, a Huntsville, Ala. physicist and sports-car racer; and Billy Hagan himself, cowboy boots and all. The lap times had come winding down until finally Cale had roared off to a 3:59.57, an average speed of 125.76 mph for the circuit, including a clocked 220-mph burst down the long straight. It was said to be the fastest that an American had driven there in the past 10 years.

Now race officials make their way through the milling crowds around the cars for a last check of the entries. At the Camaro, a couple of crewmen quickly sit down on the track just behind the car, resting their backs against the taillights. Two more crewmen stand near them, seeming to lean on the rear spoiler. They all sport manic grins. What, me worry? The American flag has been pushed slightly askew. And Tex Powell, a dirty rag wadded in his hands, is just a touch too relaxed. Oh, oh.

"What we got us here is a tiny problem," he says, talking quietly through his clenched teeth and not relaxing his smile. "We got us a small fuel leak. Gah-*damn.* Far as I can tell, it's maybe a little bitty hole in the filler neck goin' down into the fuel cell. Now, it'll run itself down below the hole in a few minutes, we think. And it sure enough will once we get to running. But now I got our guys sort of pretending to lean on the car to tilt it out—and those guys sittin' on the track are hiding the gas puddle. And I got a couple of rags throwed down there to soak it up. And finally, we're kind of hiding all of it behind the flag."

He looks around, still grinning and nodding at passers-by. "You know how it is with these here French officials," he says, "They been on us all along; one nit-pickin' thing after another. If they see some little ole thing like this, they'll throw our ass right out of the race."

Beautiful. This is a scam worthy of a gutsy band of U.S. stock-car racers transplanted into this foreign setting and—sure enough—Tex pulls it off. The race officials, in jackets and ties, stroll past, exchanging bright smiles, and the gas-soaked rags are recovered. A team of gendarmes sweeps the course free of visitors and Cale climbs into the car through the window. And, one by one, then in groups, the drivers start their engines.

Cale sits calmly inside the Camaro, watching Tex, who is standing off to one side. A flagman walks up to the Camaro and holds his thumb up at Cale, nodding his head yes. The flagman can't hear anything because of the din, obviously; the gesture is meant to ask Cale if his engine is running. Cale shakes his head no, grinning thinly at the man, and then he looks back at Tex. They continue to wait. Finally, Tex makes a switch-on signal



Roadside fans got whitecaps in their wineglasses by raising toasts to the racers

with one forefinger. And Cale hits it.

The timing is ab-so-lutely perfect. Most of the cars are running, producing a chorus of strained, high-pitched whines from engines not half the size of the Camaro's . . . then Ba*ROOM*! The Camaro comes to life with a shattering roar. Movies and TV film will bear this out; journalistic history will record it: there is a flicker of a moment when all heads turn toward the squatty red, white and blue car. There is a look of collective shock, followed by purest delight. What is *this*, this wonderful banger? It is, how you say, ze stock car? Is it ever, you Frenchies.

And away they roll.

First lap, and the cars flash past the stands in a continuous blur of bright color, a long, fast streak across the vision. And then, in the middle of the pack coming from down the hill, from *Maison Blanche*, the White House corner, comes the advancing sound: Yarborough has got the Camaro in second gear and already the crowd can hear it winding higher and higher, a sort of metallic *yang, yang, yang*—and then. *brrraaaa*ammm comes the iron thunder when he pops it down a gear. In the stands on both sides of the track, there is a sensation of silver fillings dropping out of teeth.

Cale settles the car into a pattern of roughly four-minute laps, as planned, and at 11 laps he makes a 2:45-minute pit stop. Nothing NASCAR about that, but with 23 hours and 16 minutes to go and French slow-drip refueling, who cares? In one of the pits just down the line, the crewmen have already opened bottles of cold beer and they stand there sipping them, watching the race. Tex Powell looks at them in astonishment.

Out on the circuit, Cale finds that he can eat up some of the cars. "Hell, I had to back off to keep from running right over some Porsches," he says later. But then it happens.

He had just swung boldly out of the hairpin turn after the Mulsanne Straight and was picking up speed again, headed into a twisty section toward Arnage Corner. "On the first left-hand turn, the brakes went real mushy," he says. "And in the *next* turn, they went zero. I didn't have any brakes at all."

Like any NASCAR veteran, Cale looked immediately for a soft spot to spin it out. There was a fine, grassy patch just off the track ahead. But, unhappily, it was crowded with spectators, and there were a couple of race marshals there as well. Cale recalls that an image instantly froze on his mind: the spectators were chewing on those long, thin loaves of bread and drinking red wine from bottles without labels. And with the fat, 20-inch-wide tires on the Camaro, there was no way he could spin it on the track to scrub off speed. "I tried everything," he says. "I tried grabbin' gears (translation: downshifting like crazy). But, no. And I sure couldn't wipe out all those people. So I just aimed her toward the guardrail and slammed her in."

The car slammed in, all right, driving its nose in almost up to the windshield and pulling a few guardrail supports right up out of the ground. Cale unhooked himself and climbed out. And, in a probably illegal gesture, some spectators threw him a rope. Cale tied it to the back of the Camaro. About 15 of them tugged and heaved, spit on their hands and tugged some more. No way.

Back in the pits far up the track, the crewmen paced around, fretting. Cale was long overdue. It got to be 4:25 p.m. and nobody knew what had happened; for all the speed of the race, word travels slowly at Le Mans. And if he had crashed, under the rules they couldn't go out to help him, not even to yank his car free. If the driver could somehow get the car around to his home pit again, they would be permitted to build practically a whole new car if necessary, but the driver had to get there on his own. Then, finally, the report came: Cale was all right, he was just fine. But the car was an awful lot squattier than when it had left. A tow truck was winching it out from under the guardrail.

Well, uh, damn. End of race. End of the mighty thunder. They had run one hour out of 24—52:54.3 minutes, to be exact. Thirteen laps. The Camaro was the second car out of the race. Tex Powell sat on the toolbox and looked down at his greasy hands, then around at the crew. His eyes were red from lack of sleep. "Y'know," he said, "I been so busy all week with the car that I haven't even had time to send any postcards to the folks back home. Why don't someone here run out to one of them stands in

continued



A fuel leak was hidden from Le Mans race officials in a classic American cover-up

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the infield and get us all some postcards."

SUNDAY MORNING, June 14

Cale finishes stuffing the last red and white Winston Cup garment bag into the Peugeot. Betty Jo and the girls are crisp and fresh, as befits Southern ladies. Madame Launay stands watching; she is struggling to maintain her austere look, but regality is obviously tough this morning. And then little B.J. approaches and takes her hand and says, "We want to thank yew for bein' so nice, ma'am." And that does it: Madame Launay impulsively bends down and hugs and kisses the girls.

Off at Le Mans, over in the next valley, the race is still going on. It already has been marred by two deaths—a driver's and a race marshal's—and at the end, only 21 of the 55 cars that started will finish. The race will ultimately be won by a Porsche, of course, a 936 driven by Belgium's Jacky Ickx, with Britain's Derek Bell, each of whom had won the race before; this will be Ickx's fifth victory. They will average 125.30 mph, covering 2,997.5 miles. Not a record, and a slightly slower speed than the Camaro ran—when it was running.

"But that's racin'," Cale says.

He has maintained his composure through it all. After his crash, when Cale had made it back to the Camaro compound, it had taken a worried Betty Jo several more minutes to get to him from her seat in the stands through the dense infield crowd. By then, he had his driver's uniform pulled down to his waist and his arms were folded across his thick chest. He had been standing alone, looking bemusedly at the wrecked car.

"Daddy!" she said. "What in the world happened?"

He shrugged. "Oh, I ran it under a guardrail," he said.

"You . . . under a . . . what?"

"Honey," he said, and it was the only time all week that a slight edge was to come into his voice. "Honey, ah *crashed*."

But now the station wagon is loaded and the diary-keeper/map-reader will see if they can find their way back to Paris.

Cale turns and looks out at the chateau property. "They sure got themselves a lot of farmland here," he says. "Speakin' of which, let's head for South Carolina. I got a lot of wheat to cut before the next race." END

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BOOM BOOM TIME AGAIN

Ray (Boom Boom) Mancini is trying for something his father was denied almost four decades ago—a chance at the lightweight title *by E.M. SWIFT*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN IACONO



One boxing expert said this: "Joe Frazier had it. Frazier was the classic overachiever. He'd come at you, a one-armed, short-armed, predictable fighter. But he beat the unbeatable man. That's what this kid's got. An *intensity*. It's something you can feel—a three-dimensional thing. It takes away the other guy's enthusiasm to fight. Money can't give it to you; that's not enough incentive. It's got to be something else."

The young boxer he was talking about is Ray (Boom Boom) Mancini, a 20-year-old, 5′ 6″, middle-class white kid from Youngstown, Ohio. Two years ago, Mancini was president of his senior class at Cardinal Mooney High School and had a scholarship offer to attend Xavier University in Cincinnati. Now he is seeking the lightweight boxing championship of the world—a title he believes rightly belonged to his father 40 years ago. That's who he wants to win it for: Lenny (Boom Boom) Mancini. That's what gives him his intensity. "It's like a mission," Ray says. "It's like something on my shoulders." He is behaving like a man in a great hurry to complete his mission. Since turning pro in October 1979, Ray has won all 19 of his fights, 15 by knockout, and has soared from unheralded amateur to the WBC's seventh-ranked lightweight. If he wins his next fight, on July 19 against fourth-ranked Jose Luis Ramirez of Mexico, a title bout will surely follow.

Of course, funny things can happen on the way to a title bout. Lenny Mancini was a great lightweight in the late 1930s and early '40s. Ray Arcel, whose most recent meal ticket was Roberto Duran, spotted Lenny in Youngstown in 1938 and brought him to New York. Lenny was 19 then, and short (5′ 2″), with stubby legs (24 inches at the inseam). His upper body, though, was powerfully developed—more like a middleweight's than a lightweight's. In Lenny's first fight

continued

in New York, Charly Varre broke his jaw in the opening round. Lenny came back to his corner and told Arcel, "I lost all my teeth. I can't feel no teeth."

Arcel looked into his mouth and said, "You're all right."

Lenny shrugged it off and won the four-round fight on a decision. He was out of action for six months.

By 1939 Lenny had attracted quite a following in Brooklyn, where he had most of his fights. Fans loved his relentless attacking style and dubbed him Boom Boom. Later he beat Billy Marquart twice, Joey Fontana and a rough customer called Chief Crazy Horse. Mancini became known as a "one-man riot gang." One boxing scribe wrote, "With Boom Boom, you wound him up and he couldn't stop punching." He never took a step backward and was willing to accept two punches to deliver one. And he was knocked off his feet only once in 88 fights.

In 1941, Sammy Angott was the lightweight champ. Boom Boom and Angott met in a non-title 10-rounder that year—both were over the 135-pound weight limit—with Angott winning a split decision. The referee gave the fight to Boom Boom, 7–2–1, and when the decision was announced, there was sustained booing. That was Mancini's biggest payday: $5,000.

On Nov. 11, 1941, he had his final lightweight fight as a civilian. It was against the Canadian champion, Dave Castilloux, in Montreal, and this time Boom Boom won by a decision. "Mancini was the perpetual motion kid himself," one newspaper reported. Always popular with the fans, Boom Boom was given a standing ovation when the decision was announced. The win established him as the No. 1 contender for Angott's crown.

Negotiations for a title fight were under way when, on Jan. 15, 1942, Lenny Mancini was drafted into the Army. His manager told him to request a 30-day furlough so that he could get his long-awaited shot at the title. Mancini even offered his entire purse to the Army. Selective Service's answer: We want you, not your money.

And that was it. Boom Boom was assigned to the Medical Corps and stationed in Rockford, Ill. One day a patient pointed to a tray of medicines and asked for something for his sore throat. Boom Boom brought him back a bottle of iodine. "You trying to kill me?" the patient screamed. So Boom Boom was reassigned to the library. Later he was a phys-ed instructor. Then orders came through that all athletes in his company were to see combat duty. He became an infantryman, and on Nov. 11, 1944, he was hit by mortar shrapnel in Metz, France. "That Metz deal was a slaughter," he recalls. "I never saw anything like it. The shell landed about 15 feet away, and all I felt was a jolt. I couldn't move. I thought I'd had it."

Shrapnel, six fragments in all, tore through his back, arm and leg. Physicians were able to remove only four. He was six months recuperating. At the end of June 1945, he was discharged from the Army with a Purple Heart. But Boom Boom was no longer a lightweight. He weighed 190 pounds.

Against doctors' orders, Boom Boom began training again. Boxing was his life. That's all he knew. He got his weight down to 152, but could go no further. By 1946 he was fighting again as a 5' 2" middleweight. He absorbed terrible punishment, but he never went down, and he was cut only once. His skin, uncommonly tough, would swell instead, and the fights would go the distance. Soon he was seeing double out of his right eye. There was talk of a fight with Rocky Graziano, who was on his way to the top, and a $25,000 payday, but Graziano fought Sonny Horne instead. In December 1947, Boom Boom retired at the age of 28. His professional record was 73 wins, 12 defeats and three draws.

Lenny Mancini was a pure slugger. His son, he says, is "more scientific" and "a lot smarter."



The phone in the Mancinis' Youngstown home rings for the zillionth time in the past two weeks, and Lenny, on a day off from his job at General Fireproofing, his employer for 30 years, grumbles as he rises to answer it. It's painful to watch him move. He limps all over. Age, boxing and the shrapnel wounds have all left their marks. On top of that, he broke his right wrist a month ago in a fall. He is partly blind in his right eye and speaks out of the side of his mouth, as if the old jaw injury still bothers him. His voice is deep and very gruff, not unlike Marlon Brando's Godfather. "El!" he calls to his wife, Ellen, after answering the call. It's another ticket order. The Mancinis have always sold tickets to Ray's fights out of

continued

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their house in Youngstown, but Ray's popularity has overwhelmed them. The 1,480 tickets they were allotted for the forthcoming Ramirez fight were sold out in days, and when the requests kept coming, they finally had to take the phone off the hook. "Never again," Boom Boom swears.

Ellen Mancini—Mrs. Boom Boom to Lenny's friends—met her husband in 1947 when they literally walked into each other on a New York street. He took advantage of the situation to flirt with her. When she asked him to move out of her way, he declined. So she asked if he thought he owned the sidewalk.

"I bought it this morning," Lenny reported.

"Then I'll walk in the street."

Naturally, they fell madly in love. The next time they met, on July 15—his birthday—he asked her for a little *funghi*. *Funghi* is Italian for mushrooms. But Ellen is Irish. When Boom Boom demonstrated that what he wanted was a kiss, by puckering his lips in a mushroomish way, she gave him one. That December he retired from boxing, and in January they eloped to Baltimore. She was 19, and when she told her father, he started to cry. She asked him why. She was married; he should have been happy.

"But he's a fighter," her father said.

When he suggested that Lenny might start to knock her around, she reassured him. "Besides, I can always outrun him," she said.

Ellen plays a good game of racquetball, and once bowled a 269, with 10 straight strikes. It was she who used to play catch with Ray in the yard. But it was the father that Ray idolized. Other kids said they wanted to be policemen or firemen when they grew up, but Ray said he wanted to be a boxer. Everyone seemed to think that was pretty cute. "They'd tell me, 'Ray, your dad was the uncrowned champion,' " he says now, "and I saw how people around town treated him, how they idolized him."

"He was the most amazingly sensitive child," Ellen recalls. "When he was six, seven, eight years old, Ray would get his daddy in off the street if he'd had too many beers. He'd say, 'Sit down, Dad, take off your shoes.' Then he'd tickle his cheek until he was asleep. Only then would he relax. It wasn't that he was embarrassed for him; he just didn't want anyone outside to see his father that way."

When he was 10, Ray gave his father what is now Lenny's most precious possession. It's a block of wood he made in shop class, a piece of two-by-six cut at an odd angle. A photograph of a grinning Ray is pasted at one corner, and across the top is inscribed CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK. That's how he thought of himself. Once in a while Lenny would put up his hands in the living room and say to Ray, "Let's see what you can do," letting Ray pound away at them. But that was the only boxing Ray did. He played basketball, baseball and football, like the rest of the guys in school. "I'd never fought," Ray says, "but in my heart I always knew that one day I would."

"One time he was watching his older brother, Lenny, train down at the gym," Ellen recalls. (Lenny Jr. was tragically shot and killed this past February by a girl who said he was teaching her how to shoot a gun.) "The coach, Ed Sullivan, asked Ray, 'How does he look?' Ray said, 'Fine. But you know what? I'm going to be the best boxer you ever had.' I kept trying to channel him in other directions, but he always kept coming back to boxing."

When he was 13, Ray wrote a poem for his father, entitled *I Walk In Your Shadow*. The second stanza reads:

I cry every tear that this man cries,
I try every task that this man tries,
I keep every memory that this man keeps,
I leap every mountain that this man leaps.

In the evenings, Ray would ask his father to tell about his fights, stories he had heard dozens of times. Lenny would resist, and then finally give in, telling him in that gruff voice how, say, he beat Billy Marquart twice in a month. After which a Cleveland writer had said, "It is the opinion of this scribe that Lew Jenkins won't hold the lightweight title long if he's foolish enough to step into the same ring with the squat little Italian in a title bout. Lenny is a fistic tornado, a young wildcat, and a human dynamo all rolled into one." Ray knew all the clippings by heart. He had gone through his father's scrapbook so many times that he remembered more about Boom Boom's career than Boom Boom did. He'd seen the pictures of his father with Joe Louis, with welterweight Tony Janiro, with lightweight champ Lou Ambers. He learned the old names, the dates and places, was keeper of the memories.

When Ray was 15, Ellen says, he announced that he wanted to train for the Junior Olympics. "It came out of the clear blue sky," she says. "I asked him, 'In what? Football?' " He was a star in three sports: defensive back in football, point guard in basketball and centerfielder in baseball. Now he would get on with his life's work and become a boxer.

He started as a southpaw. "He was wearing his father's old trunks and old shoes in training, literally trying to walk in his father's footsteps, and finally I asked him if he wanted me to go up and get the old mouthpiece, too," Ellen recalls. Ray eventually was outfitted with new equipment, and in his first tournament he won his first five fights, one a 13-second knockout and another a 31-second affair. He lost a split decision in the regional final, and returned home with a silver medal.

Then Ed Sullivan, his amateur train-



Griffith taught Ray body punching—where blows do the most damage

er, made him a righthander. "I do everything left-handed except hat and box," says Ray, whose greatest thrill is still a game-winning, 360-foot home run he hit in a state baseball tournament. Lefthanders had trouble getting fights, Sullivan knew, and the switch would give young Boom Boom a devastating left hook. Like his father, Ray had a powerful upper body, but he had a narrow 26-inch waist, and was longer-legged—30 inches at the inseam. The additional leverage made Ray a fearsome puncher from the start.

But his style wasn't suited for the amateurs. He achieved a fine 43–7 record, but he never beat an Olympic-level boxer, or won a national AAU or Golden Gloves title. Amateur boxing favors a stand-up, jabbing style. Because there are only three rounds in a bout, wearing down your opponent with a body attack means very little. Mancini was a croucher who would plow in amid a swirl of hooks. "When we first saw him," says Dave Wolf, the former sportswriter who is now his manager. "Ray was a face fighter, like his father. He'd come at an opponent bobbing and weaving so he could fight him in close, and he wasn't above hitting you with a passing elbow when he threw the hook. That's the sort of thing that turns off amateur judges, and it's just what you're looking for in a professional fighter."

Wolf, whose only clients at the time were Duane Bobick and Too Tall Jones, sent his trainer, Murphy Griffith, to the 1979 National Golden Gloves Tournament in Indianapolis to scout for prospects. Griffith, who trained fighters in the Navy for more than 30 years and is the uncle of five-time world champ Emile Griffith, was immediately taken with the young Boom Boom. "I saw the name," he recalls, "and I thought, 'Hey, I know a Mancini.' He was raw, but he reminded me of a little Marciano."

Mancini turned pro despite his father's objections, signing on with Wolf and Griffith and moving to New York. He slept on Griffith's couch and began to learn the jab and the art of defense. A month later he made his pro debut back in Struthers, a community outside Youngstown. Top billing. The cover of the program showed a picture of Lenny, looking gnarled and somewhat pained,



The things Wolf liked about Ray, amateur judges didn't

raising the arm of his handsome, smiling son. The caption read, "The Second Coming."

"My father didn't want me to turn pro," Ray says. "He told me it was a tough life, a painful life, a lonely life. The first two you could get through, but it's that third one that's the bitch. He said he *had* to fight for a living. I didn't. But when I told him I wanted to win the lightweight title for him, what could he say?"

His mother thought of something. "Your father's got no regrets. He's had a good life," she told him. "After all, he's had me. Live your own life."

Ray won his pro debut in fine fashion, knocking out one Phil Bowen at 1:59 of the first round. He began to fight on the undercard of Too Tall Jones' bouts. Jones would tell friends that if he could fight like the white kid, he'd be the next heavyweight champion. Griffith was working on Ray's hand speed, teaching him to box and block punches. He gave him a course in fistic anatomy, showing him where to land punches that would do the most damage. Ray became a crippling body puncher, with the double left hook his most destructive weapon—the first to the rib cage, the second to the jaw. He won 12 of his first 17 fights on first- or second-round knockouts.

"His father didn't want him to fight," says Griffith, "but he told him if that's what he wanted, it wasn't enough to just *want* to be a fighter. You had to make sacrifices. Ray works so hard. He's been schooled to work hard. One thing we don't have to worry about is him running around."

Like the elder Boom Boom, in the ring Ray is in perpetual motion. Griffith compares him with Henry (Hammerin' Henry) Armstrong, who once held the featherweight, lightweight and welterweight titles simultaneously. Armstrong used to throw 80 to 90 punches a round, hence the nickname. Ray averages more than 100. Yet he never gets so arm-weary that he stops pounding. He works out regularly on Nautilus machines to develop his already formidable upper body, and sometimes stands neck-deep in water and throws punches for up to an hour. Says Wolf, "He's in better shape than anybody he's going to fight, which is very comforting. People have to face the fact that not only is he devastating early, but he's going to be devastating all the way."

In his New York debut, young Boom Boom knocked out Norman Goins in the second round with a vicious double left hook. Arcel, his father's former trainer, was in the crowd specifically to see the chip off the old block. "Just like his father," he said afterward. Lenny disagrees: "He's a lot more scientific than I was. A lot more smarter."

Ray had his biggest fight so far on May 16 against sixth-ranked Jorge (Kid Dynamita) Morales of Los Angeles, who held the North American Boxing Federation title. The bout was televised nationally by CBS, and Sugar Ray Leonard did the color commentary. Before the fight Leonard depicted Mancini as something of a brawler. By the middle rounds he was apologetically correcting himself to viewers. The fight was stopped after nine rounds. Boom Boom had won all nine on two cards and was ahead eight rounds to one on the third. He had averaged 110 punches a round, but what most impressed and surprised observers was that he showed he could stay outside and jab, despite his short (65¾-inch) reach. "Ain't but two ways you can fight

continued

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Ray's mother runs a ticket office out of their home whenever he has a fight in the Youngstown area

in boxing," Griffith says. "Inside or outside. There ain't no in between. I've taught Ray to do both. He surprised a lot of people by boxing against Morales. A lot of little guys can only get inside and hang."

Like Lenny (Boom Boom) Mancini. That was his game. He got inside and banged. The simple truth is that Ray is a better fighter, more skilled, more versatile than his father ever was. And about the only person who doesn't realize it is Ray himself.

The Ramirez fight this month will also be televised by CBS. The winner hopes to land a title bout with WBC champion Alexis Arguello, who barely beat Ramirez on a controversial split decision last November. Ramirez is a lefthander; he is the Mexican lightweight champion; and he figures to be Mancini's toughest test. Boom Boom thinks it will go the distance.

"My father never fought a southpaw, so he can't help me on this fight," Ray says. He is a gracious, popular young man—not cocky—who talks very nearly as rapidly as he punches. "He told me, 'Just go in there and throw punches. That's all I ever knew.' That's what he says before every fight.

"Once he told me, 'Just remember, you've got too much heart for this guy. Think of that, and it'll get you through a fight.' I always do think of that. That was the thing about him—he had too much heart for anybody he ever fought. That's why I want him with me the whole day before I have a fight. You'd hit him and he'd keep coming at you. You couldn't slow him down. He was a feared fighter, and if he was coming up nowadays, he'd be a millionaire for sure. That's why I've got to do it for him. I know what he went through. The heartaches. He always says, 'I never took a step backward, but sometimes I wish I did.' I love it when he says that."

I want to feel this man's pains.
I want to be locked in this man's chains.

A writer from New York was interviewing Ray recently, and she said to him, "That's a great gig you've got going with you and your father." Ray wasn't sure what she meant, so, being polite, he smiled and nodded. "But really," she asked. "Why do you fight?"

"What do you mean?" he said. "I just told you. My father."

"Sure, sure," she said, certain she was onto something. "But why *really*?"

Ray caught on and, angry now, said, "It ain't no gig, lady, and I don't really care what you think." It was his first heavy exposure to Big Apple cynicism.

Already he's been exposed to the price of fame. Youngstown, an industrial city that has fallen on hard times because of steel mills closing down, is starved for heroes. In the two-county area around it, 28,000 people are out of work. Ray Mancini is a local boy who has made good and who hasn't forgotten his roots, and he is now Youngstown's own Hands of Stone. "I can tell you honestly," says one resident, "there's not too much else to go on here."

In the euphoria following his victory over Morales, Ray, who is trusting and outgoing in the extreme, accepted every request for an appearance and found out just how demanding people can be. Boom Boom Sr. accepted an invitation for Ray to speak at a father-son luncheon on Father's Day, but then forgot to tell Ray about it. A last-minute phone call got the two of them to the luncheon, very late, and when Ray arrived he was in a funk. His father's memory lapses have always exasperated him. "But then I thought about all the things he gave me that he never had, and about how lucky I was, and how petty I was being over something like his memory, and I was just embarrassed," Ray says. His message that day was that sons should realize their fathers aren't perfect, and have no right to expect them to be.

Ray Mancini isn't walking in a shadow at all. "I've told my father that if I am half the man he is, I'll be happy in life," he says. "But there are so many ways I want to be different from him, too. There aren't many sons that can really give something to their fathers. I'm fortunate to be able to. A lot of people ask me if I'll retire if I win the title. What will be my motivation? It's pride. A lot of guys win it once and lose it. But to hold on to it. . . ."

The intensity is his own. Not his father's. It's a real, tangible thing, like a left hook, and it has taken him far. Whether he wins the title or not, young Boom Boom's all right. He's tackling life face first. And it ain't no gig. **END**

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by Barry McDermott

Goldilocks 1, Bears 0

Actually, the Soviets did win the team title in the Coors Classic, but Nevada's Greg LeMond stunningly took individual honors to become the U.S.'s fair-haired boy.

Well, the Soviets have something else to worry about. It isn't enough that the U.S.S.R. must contend with dissidents, Poland and such vile capitalist trash as punk rock, now in cycling, where the Soviet Union has been very big, it has run into Greg LeMond.

LeMond is the dimple-chinned, blond-haired, rosy-cheeked Yankee Doodle Dandy with the pastoral address of Washoe Valley, Nev., a hamlet near which steep mountain passes and oxygen-thin altitude are perfect for developing the world's next great spoke hero.

Last week in the Coors International Bicycle Classic, with the candles on his 20th birthday cake barely extinguished, the indefatigable LeMond challenged the older, more seasoned Soviet stars, as well as most of America's best and riders from nine other countries. When the tortuous nine-day stage race through and around the Rocky Mountains ended over the Fourth of July weekend, his pocketful of miracles had patriots waving American flags and screaming.

Bicycle stage racing is a team sport, with riders blocking and pulling for each other, and when the Soviets selected the Coors Classic for their first senior-division appearance in the U.S., everyone assumed that one of their five Olympians to make the trip, including the gold and bronze medal winners in the individual road race at the 1980 Games, would take the individual title.

And on June 30, after five days of racing, it looked as if that would be the case. Yuri Kashirin was in first place while LeMond, miffed that the majority of the Americans were intimidated by the Soviets, was seventh. But the next day LeMond won the 32-mile race over aptly named Suicide Hill. LeMond's forte is flattening out a landscape, and he blitzed the pack on the upgrades, assuming the lead on the third circuit of the 18-lap course and then outsprinting Noberto Caseres of Colombia at the finish. Later, in that day's second event, LeMond got to wear the leader's red jersey by virtue of a second-place finish in a time trial, thereby setting himself up to pull off a major upset in the closest thing the U.S. has to the Tour de France.

The Coors Classic was born in 1975 as the Red Zinger, a little two-day pedal through the park, and since then organizers have kept adding new events with a view to toughening it up; this year they sent the 70 male competitors on a 538-mile dash hitting Denver, Boulder, Vail, Estes Park and Snowmass, for more than $50,000 in prize money.

This is LeMond's kind of racing, the tougher the better—early in the going he fretted that it wasn't hot enough. As a junior (15-18 years of age), he had created a sensation by winning three medals in the 1979 Junior World Championships, including the gold for the glamour event, the road race, and this year he signed a rich pro contract with the highly respected French team of Renault-Elf-Gitane. He thus became a teammate of Jacques Boyer of Carmel, Calif., the 1980 Coors Classic winner, who last week was off making history as the first U.S. rider ever to participate in the Tour de France, while LeMond and his third-string French teammates took on the Russians. "It's important for me to be here," LeMond said. "I want to keep my position as the top American in the U.S."

This has been a big year for LeMond; his pro coaches have coaxed him through the early phases of his development the way a major league baseball club might season a phenom on the farm. He won his first stage of a pro race in the Tour de l'Oise in France, but perhaps even more impressive was his fourth-place finish in the Dauphiné Libéré, which is regarded as the second or third most prestigious race in Europe. LeMond is expected to ride in the Tour de France within two years, and after last week his boosters were repeating their conviction that he could be the first American to win it. "First," you may have noticed, is a word that keeps popping up around LeMond.

Normally, someone of his reputation would have been the center of attention in the Coors, but last week the Soviets grabbed most of the publicity. "They've got all their best people here," said Race Director Michael Aisner. "The Russians came not just to win, but to embarrass. Before they arrived they asked a lot of questions. The one they didn't ask is: 'Who'll be there?' They were supremely confident."

Perhaps that is what caught up with the U.S.S.R.'s big gun, Sergei Sukhoruchenkov, the road race gold medalist in the Moscow Olympics and recently vot-

continued

For LeMond it was downhill after Suicide Hill



ed top amateur cyclist in Europe. (The Soviets don't participate in strictly pro cycling events such as the Tour de France.) "Sukho" took himself out of the race early, in the 83-mile stage known as the Bob Cook Memorial Vail Pass Road Race. Somewhat impetuously, he broke away and rode alone for 46 miles, expending an enormous amount of energy and exhausting himself before he was caught and passed by the pack. Sukhoruchenkov never recovered from that debacle, although he eventually made up enough time to finish fourth.

Meanwhile, LeMond was moving closer to his personal confrontation with the other Soviets. The Coors Classic was decided, as it often has been, in the 10th stage, the 92-mile Morgul-Bismarck, a fearsome race held last Saturday near the outskirts of Boulder. The 13.2-mile course, none of which is protected by a hint of shade, features the Hump and the Wall, two precipitous stretches of road. Ho-hum. The Soviets had been using the course for training from the moment they had arrived in Colorado.

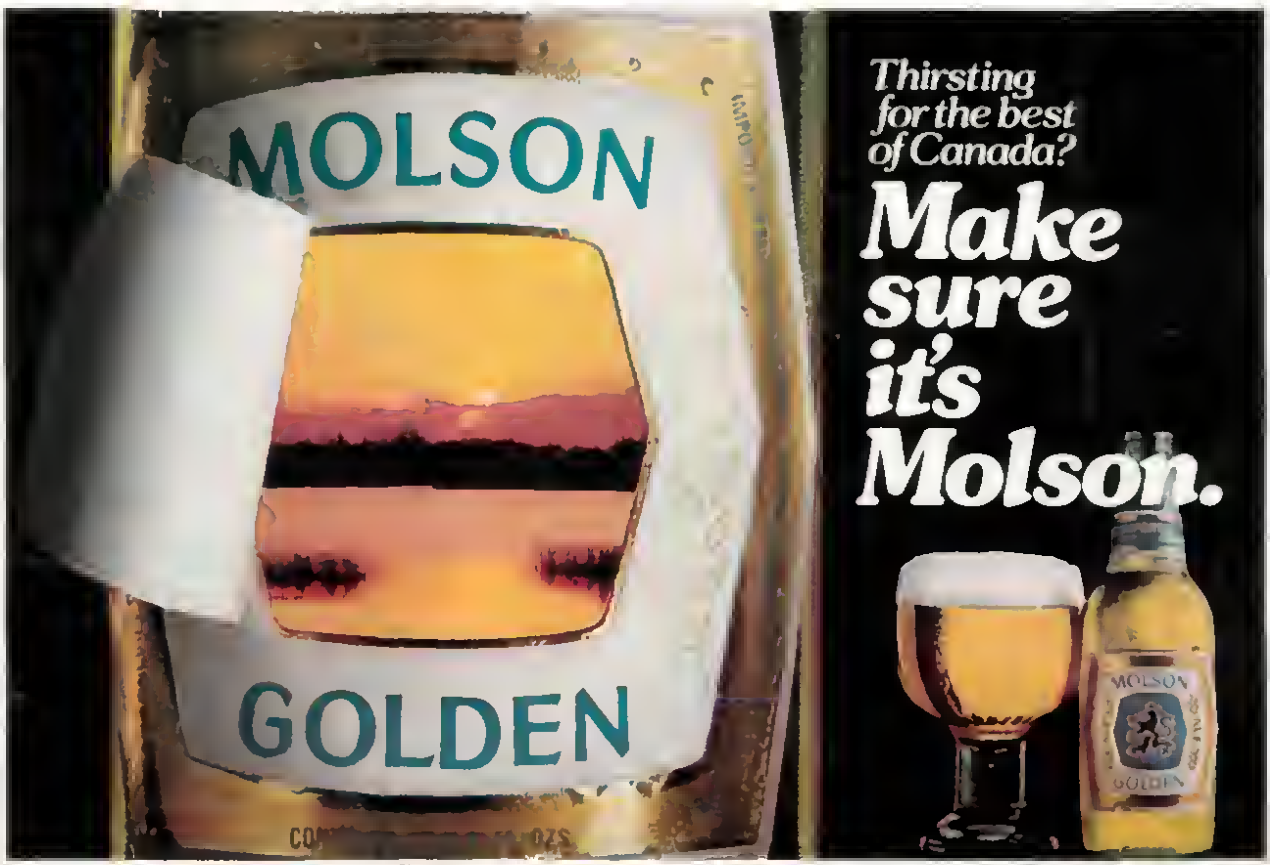
Early in the Morgul-Bismarck, the five U.S.S.R. riders broke ahead of the pack, although one soon faded back. "Hey, hey," shouted LeMond, calling for help as he gave pursuit. He would get none from his teammates. With about 53 miles left in the stage, the temperature was near 90°, the sun was scorching, and except for Alessandro Pozzi of Italy, who eventually got a flat tire, and Alan McCormack of Ireland, LeMond was alone with the Soviet juggernaut.

Lap after lap, he stayed right there, hanging with the Soviets and McCormack. Entering the final stretch—the 150-yard Wall—LeMond made his move. As the Russians weaved and blocked, LeMond pulled ahead and sprinted for the finish line. Yuri Barinov, bronze medalist at Moscow, stayed on LeMond's rear wheel and slingshotted past him at the finish, winning by a bike length. LeMond's second place, however, all but guaranteed him the individual title; the Russians nailed down the team championship with four of the first five places.

"It was four against one and they still couldn't drop me," LeMond said later, adding derisively, "They're stupid." He was a bit irked at the way he had to pick his route through weaving bikes in the final sprint and at the Soviets' verbal harassment throughout the race. When asked about LeMond's comments, they feigned surprise.

"He must learn respect for the other competitors," huffed Sukhoruchenkov. Countered LeMond, "He's 25. I'm 20. I got a lot more time at this than him."

In last Sunday's final event, while Connie Carpenter, after a year's retirement, was winning the Coors women's title, LeMond protected his big four-minute, 47-second lead, taking it easy in a 50-mile criterium in North Boulder Park and avoiding anything counterproductive, like a major crash. He finished with that lead over the runner-up, Kashirin. The Soviets may have come looking for an easy victory, but they should have asked about LeMond. **END**



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by Anthony Cotton

A new road to riches

Free agents are costing millions under the NBA's Right of First Refusal system

For Mitch Kupchak, 27, a 6′ 9″, 235-pound free-agent power forward soon to be both a former Washington Bullet and a millionaire, the biggest worry these days is how to invest newfound riches. "Gold and diamonds are just too expensive," he says. "Fancy cars I'm too hard on. I'd just wreck 'em. Besides, I probably wouldn't fit into one. All I'd like is a pool built into my backyard."

The cost of a pool no longer poses a problem for Kupchak; the question simply is where it will be built. Although the answer won't be official for weeks, contractors in Los Angeles should get ready. Kupchak, who says the Bullets have told him they can't afford to meet his demands for next season, has received an offer from the Lakers for between $700,000 and $850,000 per year over an estimated seven-year period.

The Lakers' offer represents quite a windfall for a man who has never been a starter in the NBA, who last season made $160,000 and who two years ago almost had his career ended by a herniated disk. But under the NBA's new Right of First Refusal system, windfalls for free agents are fast becoming commonplace. Indeed, in the two months since the Right of First Refusal went into effect, it has radically changed the salary structure of pro hoops.

Laker owner Dr. Jerry Buss, not wanting to risk what might happen under the new system when Magic Johnson's contract is up in 1984, two weeks ago signed Johnson to what is probably the biggest contract in sports history—$25 million for 25 years. Cleveland's Ted Stepien has lavished riches on even journeymen players. And Seattle has offered Denver Nugget Forward Alex English a contract that includes a four-year option to buy stock in the Sonics' parent company, FNI, at $7 a share. The stock is currently worth $3.60 a share, but the NBA's special arbitrator, George Nicholau, has ruled that the Nuggets must come up with $300,000 just to match that clause, a decision which, if it's based on sound information, could produce a run on FNI stock.

In short, free agents are rich agents, and Kupchak is the most talented and marketable—read white—big man in this year's free-agent crop. Under the rules of First Refusal, the Bullets can match Kupchak's offer sheet from the Lakers and either keep him or work out a trade for him, or they can simply let him go, without compensation. Whatever happens, Kupchak is guaranteed the amount of L.A.'s offer.

The 13th pick in the first round of the 1976 draft, from North Carolina, Kupchak originally signed a four-year deal with the Bullets at $160,000 per year with much of that money deferred. In his first training camp he was faced with the prospect of beating out either Wes Unseld or Elvin Hayes for a starting spot. He didn't, partially out of self-preservation. "Unseld said he'd kill me if I took his spot," Kupchak says. Still he gained a reputation as a hard worker; coming off the bench in his first three seasons he averaged 13.6 points and 6.5 rebounds a game. He suffered his back injury near the end of that third season and missed much of the following year. Concerned about Kupchak's disk, the Bullets last year refused to exercise the option on his original, guaranteed contract and signed him to a one-year deal with no option. Kupchak made a strong comeback, averaging 12.5 points and 6.9 rebounds, and decided to test his value as a free agent.



Ever a sub and often hurt, Kupchak still has a million dollar smile

The first indication Kupchak had that the market would be bullish came while he was in Acapulco in May for the NBA Players' Association meeting. Word arrived that All-Star Guard Otis Birdsong, then of the Kansas City Kings, had received an offer worth a potential—with incentives—$1 million per year for five years from the Cleveland Cavaliers. Within days, Indiana Pacers Center James Edwards, a rather ordinary performer, got an offer of $750,000 per year for four years, also from the Cavaliers.

After listening to offers from at least six teams, Kupchak went to the Bullets and said he'd re-sign with them for $100,000 less than the highest bid. "My friends said I would've been nuts to sign for less than the highest offer," he says. "But I was content here. It got to a point where I was wondering

continued



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how happy I could be. I'm the last person to say that I deserve this kind of money, but I didn't go after those bids, and I'll never be in this position again. All I asked was for the Bullets to be competitive. I understand their economic decision I hope they understand mine."

Kupchak's numbers are just a fraction of the figures that Buss threw at Johnson, who had approached Buss early last season and asked if anything could be done to ensure his being a Laker forever. The result was a contract that surpasses the one previously considered the richest in sports, Dave Winfield's 10-year, $22 million deal with the Yankees.

To pay Johnson, a 6′ 9″ guard, his cool million a year, Buss purchased for $5 million the trust deed to what is presumably a piece of real estate in an unspecified location ("To tell where would only lead to someone desecrating it to get some attention. There are a lot of crazy people out there," Buss says). The interest from the 20% mortgage comes to a million dollars a year for Buss—or Magic.

Unlike most sizable or lengthy contracts, Johnson's will be paid in cash, with no deferrals. As a result, Magic will make $2,739.73 per day when his new contract takes effect in 1984. Or, based on the NBA norm of two checks per month over an eight-month period, he will get $62,500 in each pay envelope.

Buss envisions Johnson playing another 10 to 12 years and then becoming Coach Magic or General Manager Magic, which should make the incumbents in those jobs, Paul Westhead and Bill Sharman, feel terrific.

Last week Buss tried to justify Johnson's contract while relaxing at Pickfair, beneath a portrait of Mary Pickford, who seemed to beam approvingly. Pickford and her second husband, Douglas Fairbanks Sr., were the original owners of the isolated Beverly Hills mansion Buss purchased in 1980 for $5.4 million. "What we tried to do was find what would be a fair salary for a free agent in 1984," he said. "We figured that would be $700,000, but inflation until then will be a minimum of six to seven percent. Over the 12 years of the basketball portion of the contract, then, that figure would double to $1.4 million a year, so we just averaged it off to a million a year.

"Past that, you have to look at Magic's front-office capabilities Right now a good coach or general manager, with Magic's P R value, averages $200,000 a year That doubles during his playing career, and in another 15 years, with inflation, that same coach would be making $800,000."

Buss believes that in 25 years the average secretary will be making $60,000 a year, but adds, "It won't mean anything. You'll also be paying $5 for a gallon of gas and $35,000 for a car That's if inflation goes the way I say it will. I'm gambling, but if it does, then I've got the edge."

Buss would like to end the NBA draft now; he advocates free agency for every NBA player, rookie or otherwise. "If Ralph Sampson was a pianist or mathematician and six people wanted him, they would bid for his services and he would choose where he wanted to go," Buss says. "That's how it is in every other endeavor in life, why not in sports? All the draft is is selecting the right of first refusal for a player after the player's first three-year contract."

If the draft were to be abolished tomorrow the Cavaliers would be way ahead of the game. Because of trades, the Cavs have just one first-round pick until 1987. As a result, Cleveland, 28–54 in 1980-81, has been forced to go heavily after free agents Some owners and general managers of other teams would say heavy-handedly Besides the offers to Birdsong, whom Kansas City traded to New Jersey after matching Cleveland's offer, and Edwards, Cavalier owner Ted Stepien has signed former King Forward Scott Wedman to a five-year deal for a potential $4 million and has offered a four-year, $1.4 million contract to Guard Bobby Wilkerson of the Bulls.

According to Stepien, the Cavs' No. 1 need was for a center Robert Parish of the Celtics was their first choice, but he signed before the regular season ended. No 2 on their list was Edwards. Cleveland's second need was a big guard. The first choice there was Ray Williams of the Knicks, "but right off the bat he was in the million-dollar range," Stepien says.

"We were amazed when we heard that Birdsong was available. K C. had made an offer of $600,000 and withdrawn it when Otis decided to test his worth in the open market. From there it was only guesswork coming up with a figure that would be acceptable to Otis. We also wondered what we could do to make it difficult for another team to match our offer." What Cleveland did was present a bid that shocked most owners.



Magic hit a home run with his new Laker deal

Although that didn't secure Birdsong, it did get Edwards and Wedman for Cleveland. The Cavaliers guaranteed those acquisitions by giving draft picks to the Pacers and Kings not to match their offers.

While other owners have assailed Stepien for destroying the NBA's salary structure, he pleads guilty to nothing but being the victim of geographical bias. "Was Red Auerbach crazy for giving $650,000 two years ago to Larry Bird, an untried rookie?" Stepien asks. "Is Jerry Buss crazy for paying Magic so much" No, they're coastal geniuses. Me. I'm a Midwest jerk "

"The difference between the Lakers and Mr Stepien's team is that we can afford the salaries we're paying," says Buss. "If Cleveland can clear a profit, O K If not, he's cheating by borrowing money from his business. He thinks he can make money. I think he's wrong."

Stepien reportedly was obliged to borrow $3½ million from his company, Nationwide Advertising, to cover his team's losses last season, but he says, "The Cavaliers have paid all their bills since I've been here, and as long as that continues I expect to be treated like any other owner." When some of Stepien's players become free agents, he will be. **END**



HEY, KID, WANNA BE A STAR?

Because no rules prevail, many young Latins fall easy prey to unrealistic promises of fame and fortune in the big leagues

by Bill Brubaker

Dominicans like these are inspired by Cesar Cedeno, who signed at 16 and made it from this dugout to the Astros.



CONTINUED





Abreu pictured himself as a Dodger or Twin, but now he's back in the Dominican Republic free—and poor—as a bird.

On a summer afternoon in 1971 Jose Abreu, a righthanded pitcher and one of three children of a family living in San Cristóbal, Dominican Republic, accepted a $2,000 bonus to sign with the Los Angeles Dodgers. "It was the most exciting day of my life," he would say later. There was a problem, however: Abreu hadn't completed even his first year of high school, the equivalent in the U.S. of ninth grade.

A few days after Abreu signed, he quit school. He was 17 and, the scouts said, *un gran prospecto*. A helluva prospect. The following spring Abreu reported to the Dodgers' spring training camp in Vero Beach, Fla.: three weeks later he was released. Embarrassed, he returned home, where three months later he was signed by a scout for the Minnesota Twins. Abreu lasted parts of two seasons in Class A ball, appearing in 12 games, before receiving his final release.

"My biggest problem was always that I couldn't speak English," Abreu recalls. "Once, in my second pro season, when I was pitching with the bases loaded, my coach came to the mound to tell me how to work against a certain batter. I didn't understand what he was telling me, but it must have been something like 'I can't talk to you. You can't talk to me. We've got problems.' Not too long after that, I got released. For good." Abreu never returned to school. Today, at 27, married with two children, he is unemployed, except for a job pitching in the Dominican professional summer league.

"I was probably the best student in my school," Abreu says. "I know I would've stayed in school if it hadn't been for baseball. If I'd stayed in school, maybe I'd be a doctor today. Maybe I'd have a profession. Maybe I'd have a car. Maybe I'd have some money."

Abreu shrugs, helplessly.

"But what could I do? When the scouts told me I had a chance of making the big leagues, I had to make a choice: stay in school or go to the U.S. to play baseball. The choice was easy. We're poor people. When somebody offers you $2,000, you take it and you don't look back."

On an August evening in 1980, Jose Rijo, Abreu's nephew and a righthanded pitcher from a family of 10 children, also in San Cristóbal, accepted a $3,000 bonus to sign with the New York Yankees. "It was the best thing that's ever happened to me," he'd say later. There was a problem, however. Rijo had completed only his first year of high school.

Several weeks after Rijo signed, he quit school. He was 15 and, the scouts said, *un gran prospecto*. A helluva prospect.

"My teachers told me they're going to miss me," Rijo said in April, several days before leaving San Cristóbal to join the Yankees. "I told them, 'Now, I'm going to the school of baseball, to the school of the big time.' My math teacher told me, 'Well, you quit school. Now, at least do 100% to make it to the big leagues.' "

Later Rijo told his mother and his uncle Abreu—his father no longer lives at home—that he intends to finish high school during the off-season. His uncle laughed.

"It's one thing to say you'll finish; it's

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MANNY MILLAN

another thing to do it," Abreu said. "You'll learn something pretty quickly when you start playing in the States. You can't worry about school when your heart is set on playing in the big leagues."

Rijo nodded. "Maybe you're right," he said. "Maybe I'll never finish. But I don't ever want to come back home someday and have to clean yards for a living. And I want to own more than a bicycle. I'm going to pitch in the big leagues someday. *I know it.* And when I do"—Rijo glanced at his mother—"I'm going to bring you to Yankee Stadium to see me pitch."

Rijo's mother smiled. "*Buena suerte*," she said. Good luck.

Rijo should have known better than to abandon his education to take a chance at baseball. But he didn't. So, on April 5, Fred Ferreira, the Yankees' scouting supervisor for Latin America, flew to the Dominican Republic to escort Rijo, the youngest player in pro baseball, and six other teen-agers—three of whom had quit school by the 11th grade—to the land of opportunity.

Ferreira was bubbly when he stepped off Eastern's Flight 949 at Santo Domingo's Las Américas Airport. It was his third trip to the island since he had left the California Angels' organization on Jan. 1 to join the Yankees.

"This," Ferreira declared, "is a land of bargains."

During the taxi ride into town, Ferreira noticed that dozens of buildings had been covered with posters and slogans that read YANQUIS FUERA (Yankees out) and MUERTE A LOS YANQUIS (death to the Yankees). Ferreira made a mock grimace. "Oh-oh," he said. "I hope they don't mean the *New York* Yankees."

Of course, he knew he had no reason to worry. The slogans had been painted by various leftist political organizations in protest of the appearance in Santo Domingo of two U.S. warships. Unlike the Navy, the *New York* Yankees are always welcome in the Dominican Republic and in the other Latin American nations that have bargain-basement prospects. The Dodgers, Pittsburgh Pirates and every other baseball organization that offers impoverished Latin youngsters the chance for a better *mañana* get the same happy greeting.

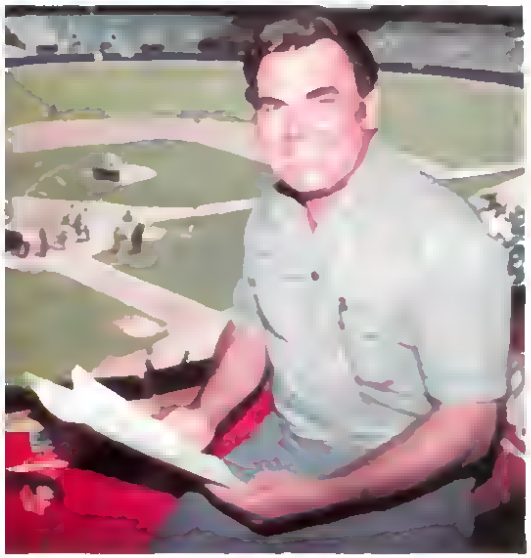
"Latin America's a great place for a scout," Ferreira said, with a contented grin. "Because there's no draft here as

continued





Farmhand Rijo hopes Bible reading will keep him out of trouble off the field, and paying heed to Coach Wilhelm will do the same on the field.



Scout Ferreira shops the "land of bargains."



Murray says no rules changes are forthcoming



HEY, KID *continued*

there is in the U.S., you can sign players at any time. At any age. On the spot.

"Sure, 15 years old may be too young to sign a kid. But it's not too young if you're afraid of losing him to another team. We're only doing our job, and our job is to look for the best players, regardless of age. It's wide open, like old-time scouting. You see a player and you sign him. I love the system and I certainly hope it doesn't change."

But it is changing. Slowly, perhaps, but finally. For the first time, serious questions are being asked about a system that has encouraged numerous Latin boys to quit high school—in some cases, grade school—to play ball in the U.S.

"Too many players' lives are being fouled up because they're signing too young," says Osvaldo Gil, a San Juan lawyer who is president of the Puerto Rican Amateur Baseball Federation. "Too many scouts don't take into consideration whether they're doing good or bad in signing young Latin players."

"My country is jammed with 17- and 18-year-old kids who have already been to the States and been released," says former major-leaguer Felipe Alou, a Dominican. "I hate to see a 15- or 16-year-old child get bagged, signed and released. Some of them try to stay in New York, illegally. Most go back home—without a job, without an education. They're no longer even eligible to play amateur baseball. It's sad."

"In my opinion, baseball shouldn't be fooling with—I should say, taking in—15- and 16-year-old players," says Johnny Johnson, president of the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues, the formal name of the minor leagues. "It's not right, morally."

"I don't like the system, don't like it at all," says George Steinbrenner, owner of the Yankees. "It may sound like I'm talking out of both sides of my mouth, but I wasn't aware we had signed a 15-year-old boy. I think in some ways it's very much of a disservice to take a kid at 15 and bring him into this country. He can barely speak the language. He has trouble adjusting. He may not be good enough. And he has interrupted his education. What this needs is a real close look by the commissioner's office. Maybe we could set up a draft in Latin America with somewhat the same guidelines as we have in the United States."

According to Haak, the Latin prospects receiving the best bonuses are "protected" Puerto Ricans

But Bill Murray, administrator for the office of Baseball Commissioner Bowie Kuhn, says, "I can't see extending the draft to Latin America in the near future. There are so many players in our own backyard to draft."

In the spring and summer of 1980 Kuhn's office examined the system of signing Latin players and concluded that it was time for a change—but only a token change. In May 1981, with the approval of the major league general managers, Kuhn enacted a rule prohibiting clubs from signing Puerto Rican players until they either turn 17 or finish the 11th grade, whichever comes first.

The provision is the same one that restricts premature signings in Canada and is similar to the U.S. rule—with one significant exception: Clubs cannot sign U.S. players until they either turn 17 or *graduate* from high school, whichever comes first. Puerto Ricans are fair game a full year before their high school classes graduate.

Baltimore Orioles General Manager Hank Peters sums up the sentiment of many baseball scouts and executives when he says, "It's not necessary to have any more rules than we have. I don't think, by and large, anyone has been abused by being signed at a tender age."

Peters needn't worry. The rule restricting signings in Puerto Rico won't have any effect on other Latin areas, such as the Dominican Republic, Venezuela and Mexico, from which more than half the Latin signees come.

"We don't see a need for a rule in those countries at this time," Murray says. "Our statistics show that a significant number of boys attend high school in Puerto Rico, at least until the 11th grade, but that a significant number of teen-age Latin American boys outside Puerto Rico don't attend school. We'd rather see kids in school, if that's the pattern in their country. But if most of them are not in school anyway and they want to play ball, then we're giving them an opportunity to earn some money."

Despite Murray's claim, most boys in strong baseball countries outside Puerto Rico attend school. According to projections made by UNESCO in 1975—

continued

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Lebron was called the youngest pro in history at 14, but was released at 17. Now 21, he lives with his family and longs for another chance

the same statistics Kuhn's office used in its study—the school-attendance levels among boys 12 to 17 years old is 89% in Puerto Rico, 62% in Mexico, 56% in the Dominican Republic and 53% in Venezuela.

"The rule [prohibiting pre-17 signings in Puerto Rico] should be extended to the Dominican Republic and other Latin countries," says Alou. "Actually, I don't think Latin players should be signed until they're 18. For crying out loud, a kid who's 16 or 17 doesn't know anything about life, about baseball, about anything. Also, such a rule would protect the amateur baseball programs in these countries. There was a time when the Dominican Republic was a power in amateur baseball. Ever since the indiscriminate signings started, that hasn't been the case."

Murray maintains, again incorrectly, that "there are few players who have been signed under the age of 17. And I don't think there are any players who have been 14 or 15."

In fact, just since 1978, no fewer than 13 Latin boys have been signed at age 15. One has been signed at 14. Altogether, no fewer than 55 Latins, more than half from the Dominican Republic, have been signed before their 17th birthday. The Yankees, Dodgers and Seattle Mariners alone accounted for 25 of the pre-17 signings.

While many of these players still have jobs in the minor leagues, the odds are overwhelming that none will ever play in the majors. An estimated 90% of all minor-leaguers, regardless of where they're from, are released before they reach the majors, according to Kuhn's office. Only 11 Latins who signed before their 17th birthday—including Pittsburgh's Omar Moreno, the only 15-year-old signee, and Houston's Cesar Cedeno, St. Louis' Sixto Lezcano and Los Angeles' Pedro Guerrero, who signed at 16—are playing in the big leagues. Five of those 11 eventually finished high school.

But those players are the exceptional few, both athletically and academically. Most pre-17 signees will follow in the footsteps of Abreu. They will be sent home to overburdened job markets, many without high school diplomas or training for non-baseball careers. Consequently, many of the complaints that have been voiced for decades in Latin baseball circles are still being heard.

• Complaints that scouts promote false hopes and misplaced priorities by assuring Latin boys—some as young as 13—that they're major league prospects.

"Too many scouts will promise a youngster that he's going to be a big league star," says Orlando Cepeda, a Puerto Rican who did make it to the top as a player. "Then when the kid gets to the States, he's lost. He finds out that it's not so easy. I know of a scout in Puerto Rico who promised to sign a player, but for some reason he never did. The kid got *very* depressed, so his father, who's a friend of mine, went looking for the scout—with a gun. Honest to God, he wanted to kill him!"

• Complaints that U.S. baseball organizations prey upon impoverished Latins, offering them only a fraction of the signing bonuses they give American players of equal or lesser ability.

According to Howie Haak of the Pittsburgh Pirates, who has been scouting in Latin America since 1954, bonuses av-

continued


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erage $4,000 for Puerto Ricans, $3,000 for Venezuelans and $2,000 for players from the Dominican Republic and the other Latin nations. Ferreira confirms those estimates, but even scouts who say that Haak's figures may be low agree that the bonuses paid to Latin players are still only a trifle compared to those offered better-educated Americans.

"We get less money than the American guys, and I don't see the reason for it," says Philadelphia Phillie reserve infielder Ramon Aviles, a Puerto Rican who signed his first pro contract with Boston. According to the Boston Red Sox, with whom he originally signed in 1970 at 17, he received a $700 bonus. "When I came to spring training I heard all these [American] guys in the infield saying they got $40,000 or $45,000," says Aviles. "I'd look at some of them and say, 'They don't have the ability I've got.' "

Twelve-year major league veteran Dave Concepcion is still bitter that he received no bonus when he signed with the Cincinnati Reds in 1967. "I asked for a bonus," says Concepcion, a Venezuelan. "He [the scout who signed him] said, 'We don't give bonuses anymore.' He lied to me."

"I try *not* to offer a player a bonus, if I can help it," Ferreira says. "I treat this money exactly like it's coming out of my own pocket and don't think about how much of it Mr. Steinbrenner may have. I could be a nice guy and offer big bonuses, but a nice guy may have to look for a job. The poorest countries are the easiest to negotiate in because the kids there are the hungriest. You give some of these kids a $1,000 bonus and you'd think you'd just given them $100,000, their parents are so unbelievably thankful."

• Complaints that scouts oversign in Latin America, bringing in players who are unlikely to become even successful *minor*-leaguers.

"They sign 25 guys and maybe only one is a good player," says Alou, who manages the Montreal Expos' Triple A club in Denver. "It's like they throw a net into the ocean, hoping that maybe they'll get a big fish. The problem is, if they don't get a big fish, they'll throw all the smaller ones back. And if the competition is between keeping a $500 Latin player or an American player who got a $15,000 bonus, who do you think the organization is going to keep?"

Montreal player development director Jim Fanning agrees. "It doesn't cost much to bring Latins to spring training," he says, "so if they don't make it, you're not out very much."

• Complaints that some U.S. baseball officials make discriminatory generalizations about Latin players.

Indeed, one major league organization has compiled a confidential report intended to show that Latins can be a risky investment because of problems that include: "general language barrier ... disregard for personal financial obligations ... petty theft ... federal income tax problems ... illiteracy ... *continued*

Gil, head of the Puerto Rican Amateur Baseball Federation, is thankful youngsters in his country can no longer be suckered by flashy inducements.



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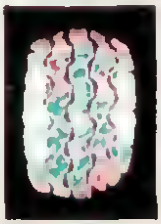
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unsanitary conditions in player's apartment creating bad community image for the major league organization."

• Complaints that many scouts assume that if a Latin boy doesn't quit school to play baseball, he'll quit for some other reason. Also, complaints that scouts think an education in Latin America isn't worth much.

"Baseball doesn't induce anyone to leave school. These guys aren't going to finish school anyway," says Haak. "I'll bet you there isn't one guy out of 20 who signed from Latin America who ever finished high school. The idea that they finish school is a lot of bull."

"In all Latin America, there's not much difference between a sophomore and a senior in high school," says Ferreira. "Believe me, I'm not knocking education. We try to encourage our players to finish high school during the off-season. The main thing is that we're giving these kids a chance to have a great career in the big leagues. Of course, the odds *are* against them."

"In the Dominican Republic, the kids aren't even in school," says Phillie Coach Ruben Amaro, a Mexican who was his club's Latin American scouting coordinator for six years. "They're out working anyway, so you're just offering them the opportunity to make a living at baseball. Here in the U.S., it's almost mandatory that kids finish high school. Over there it isn't. Really, almost since they're six years old, kids are working. And doing nothing worthwhile."

• Complaints that some scouts demand under-the-table cuts from the bonuses given their Latin signees.

"It's shameful but true," says Gil. "We have a few scouts in Puerto Rico who'll charge players a percentage of their bonus money to sign them. For these scouts, the point is not whether these players have a chance of making the big leagues or not. The point is, how much money can the scout make? If the scout can sign 10 players and get $1,000 from each, he has made a fast $10,000."

• Complaints that clubs release Latin players too quickly, without allowing them a period of adjustment.

"The coaches and the minor league managers in the States have to realize that we're different," says Cepeda. "The language, the food, the weather, the customs—it's very hard for a young Latin player to produce right away. But, many times, they're expected to."

"If the teams sign these players when they're 16, then the teams ought to keep them around for at least three years," says former American League batting champion Tony Oliva, a Cuban who's now a minor league coach for the Minnesota Twins. "A scout signs them because he thinks they have a future, but they often don't get a chance to prove that. They're competing against Americans who are 20 or 21 or older, and it's hard for them to show their real ability right off when they are that young. It may take five years for the player to show what he can really do. The situation is difficult because there aren't as many minor leagues as there used to be."



Unlike the U.S. Navy, scouts are always welcome in the Dominican

Fortunately, some clubs do allow players an adjustment period. "We try to make it a policy to keep Latin kids at least two years," says Bruce Manno, the Milwaukee Brewers' administrative assistant for scouting and player development. "It wouldn't be fair to release them any sooner. It usually takes them two years because of the adjustment to the surroundings and the environment, so we give them the benefit of the doubt."

"They walk into spring training like little babies," says California Angel Coach Preston Gomez, a native of Cuba. "They're handicapped by the language barrier, and that keeps them from becoming good players. I tell them to try to learn the language as fast as they can. The sooner they do it, the better they'll be."

Some clubs—the Mariners and Chicago White Sox, for example—conduct English language classes for players during spring training. The Mariners even provide copies of training manuals and contracts written in Spanish.

Most clubs don't emphasize language study. The Reds held Spanish classes for their managers, coaches and instructors during spring training in 1980, but discontinued them this year. "It's a tough go for the coaches—they're on the field all day and have only a few nights a week off," says Reds vice-president of player personnel Sheldon Bender, by way of explanation.

• Finally, complaints that Latins are signed before they are ready—athletically and emotionally—to emigrate to the United States.

"The big problem for everybody scouting in Latin America is free agency," says Amaro. "We would like, ideally, to sign players when they're older. But with free agency, with no draft of amateur players, you can't wait. Nobody's going to hold back until kids are 18 or 19 or even 17 to sign them. If you wait, someone else will sign them."

"If other organizations would wait until players are 17 before signing them, then we might do it, too," says Seattle assistant director of player development Steve Schryver.

Other baseball people don't buy these excuses. "I don't feel good about signing them too young," says Gomez. "They forget about their education, and if for some reason they don't make it, they can't get a decent job to make a good living. I tell them to do what kids do here—finish high school and sign at 18."

"Too many times young Latins come out with emotional problems," says Gil. "Kids who sign at, say, 16, and fail, sometimes never overcome that. No matter where they go, as students or workers, they never forget that they were failures at 16. I've seen kids who didn't make it in baseball become drug addicts. So many of them just don't know what to do when they get released.

"The government of Puerto Rico, through its Sports and Recreation Department, should begin to keep track of all the boys who sign and what happens to them. I'm not able to keep track of all the players who disappear after they're released. For example, I'm the president of the baseball federation, and I don't even know what's happened to Jorge Lebron."

continued

Ah, yes—Jorge Lebron. A legend in the Puerto Rican baseball community—for all the wrong reasons.

Lebron, a shortstop, was billed as the youngest player in professional baseball history when at 14 he signed with the Phillies seven summers ago. Within weeks after he finished the eighth grade, he was ushered to Atlantic City to face his first press conference and meet his hero, Joe DiMaggio.

"Keep your nose to the grindstone," DiMaggio cheerfully advised Lebron, as cameras clicked.

"We're not ransacking the cradle," Amaro, who signed Lebron, declared at the press conference. "He's as good a prospect as I've seen. On a major league standard of 70, he graded 68 or 69 on all the tests for running, fielding, throwing and hitting. If he continues to progress like he has so far, he could be so good it's scary."

The cries of exploitation were loud, even though the Phillies gave Lebron a generous bonus—$16,500. "In a way he's being exploited," Amaro admitted, "but, being the youngest ever to sign, he almost has to be."

Lebron fell far short of Amaro's expectations. He appeared in two games during the summer of 1974 for the Phillies' Auburn (N.Y.) farm team in the New York-Pennsylvania League and went hitless in five at bats. The following season, playing for Pulaski, Va. in the Appalachian League, Lebron was in 33 games and had 23 hits in 91 at bats for a .253 average. Back in Auburn in 1976, Lebron—still only 16—played in 43 games and batted .248.

"During the '76 season, we had to switch Lebron from shortstop to third base because he lost the agility he'd had when he was younger," says Jack Pastore, the Phillies' assistant director of minor leagues and scouting. "His body just got thick. I'm not saying he got fat or heavy—just thick. The slim, good-looking infielder we signed at 14 just ended up being a big-legged kid who never grew taller."

Lebron was released on March 31, 1977, during spring training. He was 17. "The boy was devastated when he was let go," says Gil. "This was just another example of how clubs do not consider that there are two ingredients to being successful in baseball: the physical and the mental."

"The poor kid was ruined after he was released," says Cepeda. "I felt sad for him, very sad. I once tried to get in touch with him to see if there was anything I could do to help him. But I was told that he was in hiding."

"Lebron had all the talent in the world, but he didn't know how to use it. The Phillies had built him up so much that he didn't know what to do with himself. From being a nobody to having a lot of money and a name—that's a big jump overnight."

Lebron had attended high school during the off-season so he was able to graduate in 1978. He then signed a no-bonus contract with the Kansas City Royals, only to be let go again 29 days later. "He didn't hustle enough at our camp," says Royals scout Johnny Ramos. "He should've tried a lot harder because this was, after all, his second chance."

Lebron believes he deserves a third chance. "I'm very disgusted," he says. "I don't know why the Royals released me. And the Phillies, they complained about everything I did. They told me I'd gotten too fat. I went to school during the off-season, but the Phillies wanted me to put more interest in baseball than in school. Finally they released me because they said they didn't think I was going to make it to the big leagues. I'm no longer playing baseball, but I keep telling myself, 'Well, I'm young. Maybe I'll get another chance to make it to the big leagues.'"

At 21 Lebron is no longer even remotely a prospect. With most of his bonus money spent, he lives with his family in the outskirts of Patillas, a town in rural southeastern Puerto Rico.

"I spend my time working a little, joking around and doing some exercises," Lebron says. "I work part-time at a small laboratory owned by a friend. I help my friend make false teeth. I earn from $100 up a week, depending on how many pieces I make. It's an interesting job, but I'd rather be playing baseball. Please tell the scouts that I'm still a prospect."

Rafael Montalvo, a righthanded pitcher from Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, may be a latter-day Lebron. He was signed by the Dodgers last year at 14, having been discovered in a youth league game when he was 13.

"He impressed me right away," says Dodger scout Rafael Avila, a Cuban-American who lives in Santo Domingo. "I started working with him every two or three months, whenever I'd go to Puerto Rico. I'd help him with his delivery and his motion. And I got to know his parents. I didn't want to sign him so young, but I had to rush because he started getting offers from other clubs. I made his parents an offer and they accepted. You know, some of these poor people need the money pretty bad."

Montalvo quit school in the 10th grade to accept, he says, a $15,000 bonus to sign with the Dodgers. "I was eager to play baseball since I was a little kid," he says. "The Dodgers gave me the opportunity to play. I talked to my parents and decided it was what I wanted to do. I have no plans to go back to school. This winter, I'll play winter ball."

Montalvo appeared in 14 games last season for the Dodgers' rookie league team in Lethbridge, Alberta. He had a 4–2 record and 4.94 ERA. This season he has played sparingly for Lethbridge because of an injury to his right elbow.



DeJesus at 16, his age when he signed with L.A.

Avila, like other scouts, resents the suggestion that he's exploiting youngsters like Montalvo. "Exploiting them? No, helping them," he says. "As an example, I found a kid last year in a little village on the northeast coast of the Dominican Republic. The kid couldn't read or write. All he could do was hit a few line drives and ground balls. He didn't know anything about anything else. He'd never seen a big city. He didn't know how to handle a fork and a knife to eat his food. He didn't even know how to get dressed.

"I took this kid with me to Santo Domingo, put him in a boardinghouse, paid his rent, gave him clothes and taught him everything. My wife spent many hours teaching him how to read and write. I spent $3,000 on him for six or seven months with no security, because I hadn't signed him yet. Finally I signed him, and he reported to spring training this year. Some day soon, after he reaches the big leagues, he'll become a free agent and try to make a million dollars. That's exploitation? *No way.* I'm proud to say I've given this kid a chance to have a better future."

Two days before Jose Rijo was to leave home to join "the school of the big time," he was having lunch in a Santo Domingo restaurant overlooking the Caribbean.

"Anything to drink?" a waiter asked.

"Rum punch," Rijo said, with a mischievous grin.

"No," the waiter said. "You're too young."

"O.K.," Rijo said, frowning. "Fruit punch."

Later, at his mother's house in San Cristóbal, 18 miles west of the capital, Rijo allowed that he doesn't *feel* young. He has been, after all, un *gran prospecto* since he was 13, when an Angel scout spotted him. "I remember how excited I was when this scout spoke with me about playing professional baseball," Rijo said. "I couldn't believe what was happening."

The scout, Eddy Toledo, who now works for the Mets, was so impressed with Rijo that he invited the boy to live with him in Santo Domingo.

"Jose was a helluva prospect," Toledo says, "and I didn't want to lose him."

Rijo, heeding the advice of his uncle Abreu, stayed with his mother, and soon, as Toledo had feared, other scouts were at Rijo's doorstep.

"A couple of them wanted to sign me when I was 14, but my uncle told me to wait," Rijo says. "Then, last August, a part-time scout for the Yankees told me that his organization was interested in me. The next thing I knew, Wilfredo Calvino [then the Yankees' chief Latin American scout] came to watch me pitch, and he liked the way I threw. When he asked me if I wanted to sign with the Yankees, I told him to go talk to my uncle. After all, my uncle has been through all of this before."

Abreu quickly advised his 6′ 2″, 168-pound nephew to sign—if the money was right. "I told him to go ahead because if he got hurt down here—say he hurt his arm—he'd have nothing," Abreu says. "Also, I considered that he's not a good student. But he *does* have a good fastball. Last year, he threw 79 miles per hour. This year, it's 87. And there was one more reason I wanted him to sign: We needed the money."

Abreu explains that his family is supported solely by his meager summer-league income and a brother who lives in Puerto Rico.

"So Calvino and I started negotiating one evening at the Hotel Naco," Abreu says. "I told Calvino that I wanted $5,000 for my nephew but that I would take $3,000 if I could be guaranteed that he wouldn't be released for at least two years. Calvino agreed to the guarantee."

The guarantee isn't mentioned in Rijo's contract, however. "I trust Calvino," Abreu says. "I believe he'll live up to his word."

Calvino, who no longer works for the Yankees, denies agreeing to the guarantee, which he points out is against baseball's rules, anyway. The stipulation against such guarantees obviously serves the clubs' interests, not the players'. "I didn't guarantee him anything," says Calvino, who was fired by New York last December and is now managing the Mexican League team in Mérida, Yucatan. "I know some scouts tell kids they'll get a guarantee, but I didn't do that. Rijo's not a good prospect—he's an outstanding prospect. He'll be a major-leaguer, no doubt about it."

Yankee director of scouting Bobby Hofman says, "Two-year guarantee? That's just some talk. We don't give minor league players two-year guarantees. We never have."

Regardless, Gladys Abreu is enthusiastic about her son's future. "I'm not worried about him, because he's quite a boy," she said, smiling, before his departure last April. "I'm *positive* that Jose's going to make it to the big leagues and make a big name for himself."

A pause.

A faded smile.

"Of course, that's what I said about my brother."

The goodbys were quick. "Do your best," Rijo's mother told him.

"Do what your manager tells you and learn to speak English," his uncle said. "You'll cry when you get to the States. I know I did. But you'll be all right—*if* you think *only* about baseball."

Rijo didn't cry when he joined Ferreira and the six other Yankee signees from the Dominican Republic on the two-hour flight from Santo Domingo to Miami. After passing through immigration and customs, the young men boarded a commuter flight to Sarasota, where the Yankees send their most inexperienced players for extended spring training. Ferreira wished the seven Dominicans luck and put them on the plane. "This is where a scout's job ends," he said. "Now, it's up to the manager."

The players were met at the Sarasota-Bradenton Airport by Carlos Tosca, the Cuban-born manager of the Bradenton Yankees of the Gulf Coast rookie league. The team already had rented apartments for the seven. Until the Yankees moved their camp to Bradenton for the start of the season on June 20, Rijo would share a one-bedroom apartment with Pedro Medina, an infielder who'd signed in 1979 at age 15, and Joaquin Gonzalez, a catcher who'd signed the same year at 17. Each player would pay $150 a month in rent out of his $540-a-month take-home pay. After expenses for food, laundry, utilities, clothing and phone calls home, there would be little, if any, money to save.

"*Especially* after I send my mother some money, which I'm going to do every month," Rijo said. "I don't need much money. I'm just glad to be here."

Tosca and his pitching coach, Hoyt Wilhelm, were determined to use Rijo sparingly at first. They knew he wouldn't even turn 16 until a month before the sea-

continued

son. "Awfully young." Wilhelm, who pitched in a major league game when he was 49, said, shaking his head.

Rijo's first appearance in a preseason game lasted two innings. Entering in the fifth inning, he struck out the first two batters and got the third to ground out to short. In the sixth, he yielded two walks and a hit to load the bases with one out. Two runs scored on an error by the shortstop, and Rijo didn't return to pitch in the seventh.

"I took him out because you don't want to throw a player his age into the fire too much," Tosca said. "If you do that, a player his age won't succeed. But I was impressed with Rijo in that game because I saw he could cope with failure. He didn't get rattled, which is a good sign. Matter of fact, that seems to be Rijo's disposition. The players all call him Smiley because he always seems to be in a good mood."

Rijo appeared in only five of the Yankees' 37 preseason games, allowing 13 hits and two earned runs in 9⅔ innings for a 2–0 record. At the end of last week his regular-season mark was 1–0, with 14 hits and three earned runs in six innings. In the process, Rijo has won an admirer in the 57-year-old Wilhelm, whom Rijo jokingly calls *el hombre viejo* (the old man).

"Rijo's already got an average major league fastball—and you're damn right, that's unusual for a kid his age," Wilhelm says. "You don't see many at that age who can do what this kid can do. At least, *I* haven't. He's got good arm action, so it's only a matter of waiting to see how well he progresses. If he can throw 85 or 86 [miles per hour] at 16, which he can, he should be able to throw 90 before too long. I'd say we should stay with him for at least three years, unless he hurts his arm. I personally think he's going to get better and better. For such a young kid, he seems to have adjusted quite well."

That's precisely what Rijo tells his mother—that he has adjusted well. He calls her every Saturday night and writes once a week. His letters are answered promptly. "When I read her letters, I think about all the good times I could be having with my friends from school," Rijo says.

Recently, his mother wrote (translated from the Spanish): "We got your letter and the $65 you sent us. Jose, I want you to be nice. Your girl friend comes over every day, asking about you. Don't think about ladies—only your game, baseball. Be careful when you buy the clothes you're going to bring back for your brothers and your sisters. Don't buy too big a size. Your friends, Geraldo, Jorgito and Reyes, all say hello. Tell Pedro Medina to send me the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary that he said he was going to send me. Don't call us so often. You spend too much money doing that. Besides, my telephone has been cut off for a while. Your brother called us collect too many times from Puerta Plata, where he's playing baseball. Love, your mama."



Montanez (center), local star at 15, signee at 16.

And Ercilia Guzman, the aforementioned girl friend with whom he has since broken up, wrote (also translated): "Hello, how are you, my doll? I hope you are playing well and are in no pain. Above all, I hope you are reading the Bible. Pray, and God will help you. I am very sad since you are gone. But I get happy when I read your letters. My love, try to write your letters better. I can't understand all of your letters. Watch out with all the little girls over there. I miss you. When the telephone rings, I think it is you. My love, I know you're a good cook but be careful. Don't get sick eating the wrong things. I send you my kisses. I hope you come home soon. Send me your picture. I am enclosing mine. Be careful and remember me always, my love. I'll wait for you always. I love you, Ercilia."

In Sarasota Rijo appeared to be following the advice of his mother and his girl friend. After spending eight hours a day, six days a week at the ball park, he usually stayed home at night, to watch television ("I like *Donny and Marie* and *That's Incredible!*"), practice his English ("I'm trying to learn 10 new words a day"; his favorite expression is "thatta baby"), cook dinner ("He's quite a chef," says Gonzalez. "Especially *arroz con pollo*") and read the Bible.

"Sometimes I'll read the Bible from the time I get home from practice until the time I go to sleep," Rijo said. "Reading the Bible keeps me off the streets, where there is only trouble. I've decided that to make it to the big leagues you've got to concentrate only on baseball—not on women or beer or anything else. I've decided that baseball has to be a 12-months-a-year job."

Twelve months a year—that won't leave Rijo any time to finish school. Or even complete his first year of high school. "*No importa*," he said. It doesn't matter.

It's not of great importance to Tosca and Wilhelm, either. "I think kids should finish school," Tosca said, "but in some of these countries they may be better off being out of school."

"Personally, I think he should get his high school education," Wilhelm said. "But to tell you the truth, I've never given it much thought. This is something that I can't advise him on. I look at him here as a baseball player. School, that's *his* problem."

No longer. Rijo decided after reporting to the Yankees' camp that his uncle was right.

"I can't worry about school if I ever expect to pitch in Yankee Stadium someday," Rijo said at the end of his first month in the land of opportunity. "I don't like school much anyway, so I'm never going to go back."

Rijo smiled broadly. "Thank God for baseball," he said. **END**



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On The Scene

by ALLAN POSPISIL

THEY'RE BEATING A PATH TO THE DOOR OF ROGER BRICKNER'S HIKER'S HAVEN

Imagine, for a moment, that you're hiking the Appalachian Trail, 2,119 miles from Springer Mountain, Ga. to Mount Katahdin, Maine. A little while ago you crossed into New York State, and now you're stepping warily along a rocky north-south ridge paralleling nine-mile-long Greenwood Lake, 700 feet below. It's mid-July and you're sautéed. The last lean-to you slept in was 30 miles back, the next is 20 miles north, and shining Katahdin is still 800 miles away. What would you barter your soul and boots for? A cold drink and a hot shower.

Something ahead catches your eye, a battered signboard propped against a rock: FREE OVERNIGHT LODGING FOR LONG-TERM HIKERS. APPALACHIA COTTAGE ¼ MILE DOWN TRAIL.

At the cottage a cheerful man of middle age appears, dark wavy hair displaying the faintest intimations of gray.

"Uh, I saw this sign up on the trail," you mumble.

"Sure, come on in," he says. "There's beer inside." And then, "You wouldn't be . . .?" and he says your name. As if he's been expecting you!

In all this imagined scenario, only one presumption insults credibility—that you wouldn't know Roger Brickner as the proprietor of Appalachia Cottage and the Samaritan of the Appalachian Trail. The trail grapevine is far too efficient for tales of Brickner's wondrous hospitality—the cold drinks, the food, real beds under a real roof—not to precede any hiker's approach to Greenwood Lake.

Brickner, 50, a social studies teacher at Benjamin Cardozo High School in New York City's borough of Queens, is a genial bachelor who sees the irony of his Hiltonesque habits. In 1973 he acquired a modest summer place—three rooms with kitchen and sun porch—backed up against a hill rising from the west shore of Greenwood Lake, 50 miles northwest of New York City. Just the setting for contemplative summers away from clamorous classrooms.

But two acts of kindness scrambled forever those idyllic prospects. A thunderstorm one night late that first summer deposited four drenched young hikers at his door. "I could hardly turn them out," Brickner recalls. "But they were accidentals, they don't really count."

Late the next summer, during another storm, Brickner recalled the incident and wondered if there might be other wet and miserable hikers on the trail. He climbed the ridge and left a note offering dry accommodations. Before nightfall a young man named Tim Williams, a through hiker from Georgia, came knocking to see if the offer was genuine.

During the balance of the 1974 season, seven other hikers followed the path to Brickner's door. The next year, given a full summer, 37 came, and in 1976, 88 hikers dropped by for a meal and a place



to crash. Brickner keeps a list of each visitor in yearly logbooks and posts running totals of the number of stoppers-by on the sun porch.

In 1977 the count was up to 113 and in 1978, 158. Occupancy the next year slipped to 156, but last season Brickner welcomed an even 200 hikers. "It's amazing what has happened to my summer retreat," he says, affecting wistfulness.

The first through hikers, those elite end-to-enders, begin appearing around late May or early June. Traffic peaks in July and thins as August wanes.

For statistical purposes Brickner divides the season into 10-day periods, and the record for any one such stretch is 34 hikers. "That's 3.4 a night, just about right," he calculates. "Any more than that and you wind up with a crowd. The most ever was 10, and that was a horror. By late July I begin to hope for a lull, even for one night." That rarely happens.

Such is the popularity of Brickner's Appalachia Cottage that overnight guests are restricted to true long-distance hikers—about half of those who sleep over are attempting the trail's full length—and a loose reservation system has been adopted. Seventy-five miles south at the Delaware Water Gap is the Presbyterian Church of the Mountain, which also puts up hikers, and Brickner asks that those who want to stop at his place sign up there in advance. Brickner phones the church every Saturday morning for the latest head count. "The church acts as my early warning system," he says. "It's three to six days hiking from there."

But even before preregistration Brickner was likely to know who was approaching by gossip picked up from other hikers. "Once I heard about some French-Canadians coming north," he says. "They were reputed to be gourmets, always stopping to buy fresh meat and wine. I put a sign on the trail in French and added QUEBEC LIBRE! They seemed to appreciate that."

Unless a hiker catches a night when Brickner is preparing his special shrimp dinner, meals run to simple fare such as hamburgers and spaghetti and lots of bread. "I try to give them plenty of carbohydrates, and they even think I'm a good cook," he says.

After a shower and dinner, hikers yearn most to talk. "Some of them haven't seen anyone for so long, especially if it's early or late in the season, that they'll chew your ear off," he says. Brickner's solution when the conversation exhausts even his endurance for socializing: "I get out my slides of Norway. That always puts them to sleep."

Except for one hiker who broke and entered when Brickner was away—all he took was food—the open-door policy has brought only pleasure and stimulation. "When you live in New York City," Brickner says, "you lock and double-lock everything. Here I can invite perfect strangers into my house. They're mostly kids, just out of high school or college, but a number of hikers are close to my age, too, maybe just retired, and there's a sense of real America to them. Their values are different; it gives you a new perspective. When you spend half the night talking, you really get to know them. I guess that's my payment." END





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Read TIME and understand.

TIME

FOR THE RECORD

A roundup of the week June 29–July 5

Compiled by ROGER JACKSON

BOXING—SAMMY SERRANO retained his WBA junior lightweight championship with a unanimous decision over Leonel Hernandez in Caracas

CREW—At the 142nd Royal Henley Regatta in Henley-on-Thames, England, the Oxford and Thames Tradesmen crew was the surprise winner of the Challenge Cup for heavyweight eights The 1980 Rowing Club a U S team made up of members of the country's 1980 Olympic squad, became the first women's crew to win an event at Henley, in the coxed fours Other U S winners were the University of Washington junior varsity eight, which won the Ladies Challenge Cup, the Charles River Rowing Association, winner of the Thames Cup, and Holy Spirit High School of Absecon, N J., which won the Princess Elizabeth Cup for Schools

GOLF—ED FIORI shot a final-round five-under-par 67 for an 11-under-par total of 277 to win the $300,000 Western Open in Oak Brook, Ill by four strokes over Jim Simons, Greg Powers and Jim Colbert

JAN STEPHENSON shot a 10-under-par 278 to win the $200 000 Peter Jackson LPGA 72-hole tournament in Dorion, Quebec by one shot over Nancy Lopez-Melton and Pat Bradley

HORSE RACING—TEMPERENCE HILL ($8 40), ridden by Donald MacBeth won the $167,700 Suburban Handicap at Belmont by a head over Ring of Light The 4-year-old covered the 1¼ miles in 2 02

MOTOR SPORTS—CALE YARBOROUGH averaged 142 588 mph in his Buick Regal to win the $260,610 Firecracker 400 NASCAR race in Daytona Beach, Fla. for the fourth time

ALAIN PROST, driving a Renault, won the rain-delayed French Grand Prix in Dijon, averaging 118 23 mph over 188 8 miles on the 2 36-mile Coujon-Prenois racecourse

ROAD RACING—CRAIG VIRGIN won the 10-km Peachtree Road Race in Atlanta, beating Rod Dixon by eight seconds His time of 28 03 4 was an American record for the distance.

SOCCER—NASL. In 12 years as a player and a coach with Dallas, Mike Renshew bled Tornado red, white and blue Even his boss general manager Kent Kramer, described him as "one of the most enthusiastic and enjoyable people I heve met in sports." But three days after the Tornado extended its league-record losing streak to 17 with a 2–1 loss to Calgary Kramer fired Renshaw apparently deciding that *this* nice guy wouldn't finish last Hours after Renshew's dismissal, the Tornado lost its 18th straight a 2–1 decision to Edmonton, thereby falling to 2–19 in the season and spoiling the debut of interim Coach Peter Short Although the Roughnecks' record was a more respectable 11–10, Tulsa management, disappointed by an offense that had scored only 7 goals in its last 5 games, replaced Charlie Mitchell with his assistant, Terry Hennessey Tulsa then beat Toronto 3–0 as Goalie Zeljko Bitecki got his sixth shutout, but lost 3–2 to the Eastern Division-leading Cosmos Perhaps Renshew and Mitchell can both take heart Timo Liekoski, who two weeks ago was fired as Edmonton's coach, was reinstated last week by owner Peter Pocklington after Pocklington decided he'd made "a raistake " On the field, Johan Cruyff returned to the Washington Diplomat lineup, but a groin injury hirated his playing time in the Diplomets' 3–2 victory over San Diego and their loss by the same score to Seattle Chicago (Central), Los Angeles (Western) and Vancouver (Northwest) retained their respective division leads Atlanta and Fort Lauderdale are tied for the Southern Division lend

ASL. In the all-star game at the Silverdome in Pontiac, Mich , the host, Detroit Express, lost 2–0 to a team of stars from the league's seven other teams. The Express' luck did not iraprove when regular-season play resumed It lost to Carolina 2–1 to raove within 14 points of the first-place Lightnin' in the Freedom Conference Pennsylvania beat the New York Eagles 2–1 and tied Rochester 0–0 to maintain a 26-point lead in the Liberty Conference

SWIMMING—UTE GEWENIGER of East Germany set two world records in East Berlin Her clocking of 1 09 39 in the 100-meter breaststroke surpassed by 13 of a second the mark she established on April 21 of this year, and her time of 2 11.73 in the 200-meter IM was 1 27 seconds better then the record set by her countrywoman Petra Schneider, in 1980

TENNIS—JOHN McENROE defeated Bjorn Borg 4–6, 7–6, 7–6, 6–4 to win the Wimbledon men's singles championship, and CHRIS EVERT LLOYD won her first women's singles title since 1976 by defeating Hana Mandlikova 6–2, 6–2 McENROE and PETER FLEMING beat Bob Lutz and Stan Smith 6–4, 6–4, 6–4 to win the men's doubles; MARTINA NAVRATILOVA and PAM SHRIVER triumphed in women's doubles, 6–3, 7–6 over Kathy Jordan and Anne Smith, and FREW McMILLAN and BETTY STOVE scored a 4–6, 7–6, 6–3 victory over John and Tracy Austin in mixed doubles

MILEPOSTS—AWARDED To the Pittsburgh Penguins, by an NHL arbitrator, Hartford Whaler Forward PAT BOUTETTE, 29 and a junior hockey league player as compensation for the Whalers' signing of free agent Goalie GREG MILLEN, on June 15

FOUND IN CONTEMPT Former jockey CON ERRICO, 59, by U S District Court Judge Mark Costantino for refusing to testify before a federal grand jury in New York investigating alleged fixing of horse races. Earlier, the U S Supreme Court refused to review Errico's May 1980 conviction on racketeering charges Errico must serve the contempt sentence, which could run as long as nine months, before beginning his 10-year sentence for racketeering.

SIGNED By the Cleveland Cavaliers, former Indiana Pacer Center JAMES EDWARDS, 25 to a four-year contract worth a reported $700 000 per annum Last season the 7' 1" Edwards scored 15 6 points and hed seven rebounds a game for the Pacers

TRADED By the NHL Philadelphia Flyers, Center RICK MacLEISH 31, two minor league players and the Flyers first three selections in the June 1982 amateur draft, to the Hartford Whalers for a pair of minor-leaguers and Hartford's first and third picks in the draft In 10 seasons with the Flyers, MacLeish scored 320 goals and hnd 355 assists Last year he was their second-leading scorer, with 38 goals and 36 assists

By the St Louis Blues, Goaltender ED STANIOWSKI, Defenseman BRYAN MAXWELL and Forward PAUL MacLEAN, to the Winnipeg Jets for Defenseman SCOTT CAMPBELL and Forward JOHN MARKELL.

DIED Miami Dolphins Linebacker RUSSELL (Rosty) CHAMBERS, 27, of injuries suffered in an automobile crash, 10 miles from his hometown of Loranger, La. Chembers who was originally signed as a free agent out of Tulane by New Orleans in 1976, was the Dolphins' lending tackler in 1978 and 1979

CREDITS

4—Evelyn Floret 14,15—Tony Duffy 16,17—Walter looss Jr 18—Tony Duffy 18—Tony Duffy (center) Walter looss Jr (2) 20—Walter looss Jr (top) Tony Duffy 21—Walter looss Jr 66—Joseph Daniel 68—Jerry Wachter Focus On Sports 81—Tony Tomsic 86—Anthony Nasta (center) 73—Bill Brubaker 74—Juan A Pego 81—Seth Resnick

FACES IN THE CROWD



DIANE OBERMEYER
GRAND RAPIDS

Obermeyer, a 40-year-old mother of six, established a women's race record of 351 miles in the Wolverine 200 Bicycle Marathon on Belle Isle in Detroit During her 24 hours of pedaling, she completed 65 laps of the 5.4-mile course.



MIKE JOHNSON
YODER, WYO.

Mike, a new alumnus of S E Goshen High, led the Cyclones to state titles in three sports in 1980-81 He averaged 9.7 yards a carry as a wishbone quarterback and 18 1 points a game in basketball and won four events at the state track meet



BILL MAX
LAS VEGAS

Max, in his senior season as a third baseman at Nevada-Las Vegas, hit for the cycle on consecutive days to lead the Rebels to 23–11 and 18–17 wins over Northern Colorado and L.A State, respectively He finished the year with a .443 average



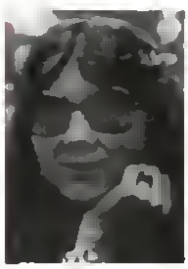
J.J. GRANT
BALDWINSVILLE, N Y

J.J., a 5' 11", 206-pounder who recently finished the eighth grade at Ray Junior High, set a national mark for 13-year-olds in the 12-pound shot with a throw of 49' 7", 2' 8½" farther than the previous record, which had stood since 1972



HERB McAULEY
ATLANTA

McAuley, 58, the swimming coach at Georgia Tech, won three age 55-59 titles at the national masters' short-course meet in Irvine, Calif He triumphed in the 50-yard freestyle (25.77), 100 free (58 08) and the 50 butterfly (29 50)



KIM WAGNER
WAUZEKA, WIS

Kim, a recent graduate of Wauzeka High, finished her four-year varsity softball career with a .603 batting average and 119 stolen bases in 120 attempts The leftfielder reached base in 80% of her appearances at the plate.

19TH HOLE THE READERS TAKE OVER

THE STRIKE (CONT.)

Sir:

I miss the daily box scores and the Sunday statistics, but I—and most other baseball fans, I think—have no sympathy whatsoever for the players and hope the owners have guts enough to see the strike through.

The players have lost all feeling for what is in the best interest of the game. They are guided solely by greed. They have the gall to ask to see the income statements of the owners. How much money the owners make or don't make is none of the players' business. An owner risks everything when he raises the capital to purchase a team and, therefore, has the right to run it in any manner he sees fit.

What about the fans? I don't believe the players care. The fans keep giving and giving and paying and paying, but what do the players give back? Very little, unless they are compensated. Should someone who earns between $300,000 and $600,000 per year charge $1,000 to $5,000 to speak to a group of fans in the off-season?

I urge all fans to support their Little League, American Legion, college and minor league teams. The players are correct on one assumption. The game will survive. But perhaps it doesn't need the present players. If the owners used minor league talent to play out the current season, I think the fans would support them.

I would rather see no baseball than have these spoiled, self-indulgent prima donnas win their strike. Fans, please support the game and the owners.

Go, Richmond Braves!

CHUCK MASON
Orange, Va.

Sir:

In 1976, the players did everything possible, short of slitting their throats, to come up with a compromise on free agency. They designed a formula that was meant to prevent free agency from getting out of hand. As it turned out, the owners—not the players—were the ones who turned free agency into a game for spoiled rich kids. And yet the players are now accused of being greedy brats.

Once again, the players are offering a compromise, suggesting a pool of players as a form of compensation for the loss of a free agent. And, again, their formula sounds reasonable. But Bowie Kuhn and the owners are too spoiled, blind and stubborn to know what is in the best interest of the game.

I have felt all along that the players were in the right. I'm happy to see that when push came to shove, the players stood their ground. The trouble is, however, that the owners probably won't wake up until it's too late. So the 1981 baseball season will either go down the tubes or, worse, finish with an asterisk beside its stats.

It's a shame, and the spoiled rich-kid owners are the ones to blame.

JIM GRACI
Lebanon, Pa.

Sir:

The strike has affected me in a way I could never have imagined.

I'm what is known as a rabid baseball fan. I live, eat, sleep and breathe the Baltimore Orioles. I cannot function until I have read the morning's sports section. I will sit in my driveway for three hours because my car radio picks up the station that carries the Orioles better then the one in the house. I traveled to Chicago last year to see the Orioles play the White Sox on Opening Day. I suffer genuine baseball withdrawal each October.

But something strange has happened. The strike has produced a totally unpredictable reaction. I'm not bored or stir crazy or even angry about the loss of my summer passion. For some reason, I just don't give a damn. It really won't matter if there isn't another game this year. I never would have believed it possible, but I have simply lost interest.

I called the Orioles' ticket office about my tickets for games already missed. I was told that I could either exchange them for future games once the strike is settled or receive a refund. I think I'll take the refund.

Sincerely—no, apathetically.

DENISE A. FEE
Bethesda, Md.

Sir:

I've been an avid ball fan ever since my boyhood days in Los Angeles. I've always considered major league baseball to be the best entertainment for my money. Having moved to Honolulu, a city with no big league franchise, I caught every game I could on Monday nights and on cable TV (NBC's Saturday games aren't televised here). I didn't think of going to see the local Triple A team, the Islanders, when I could catch the Dodgers or the Yankees or even the Braves on TV.

With the strike, I found myself heading out to Aloha Stadium to see the Islanders battle the Tacoma Tigers for the Pacific Coast League Northern Division crown for the first half of the season. In one week, I saw eight exciting games, played by men who obviously love the sport for itself, not for the money they are being paid. I saw the Islanders' George Stablein throw a no-hitter one night and Ed Figueroa of the Tigers pitch almost flawlessly another. On Saturday, June 20, I witnessed one of the best games I've ever seen, an 11-inning pitchers' duel that ended with a home run by Rick Lancellotti giving the Islanders the pennant.

I'm sold on the minors. I don't really care when the strike ends. I can always go out and catch the Islanders. The strike is the best thing that has happened to minor league baseball in years. Thank you, Miller and Grebey.

ANDY PARK
Honolulu

Sir:

I propose that baseball fans go on strike for one month upon the resumption of play, whenever that comes. It will hurt, but can you just imagine the hurt that will be inflicted on the owners' wallets and the superstars' egos by all those empty seats? They need us a hell of a lot more than we need them.

R.J. GARDINER
Lacey, Wash.

Sir:

I must disagree with Steve Wulf's statement that the strike was a "godsend" for the Cubbies (*It's 3,630 and Holding*, June 22). On the contrary, it merely halted the hottest team in baseball, a team that had just won five of its last six games, pounding Fernando what's-his-name out of the box in the process. If the strike is a godsend, then God obviously isn't a Cub fan.

JACK BUNGART
Merced, Calif.

Sir:

Steve Wulf omitted one very important person also taking a holiday from his story *How I Spent Summer Vacation* (June 29). That would be the commissioner of baseball himself, Bowie Kuhn's job seems to be limited to throwing out baseballs on Opening Day, rejecting trades and playing up to the owners. He's certainly not doing anything to end the strike. Like most baseball fans, we hope his vacation goes on long after the strike ends—in the commissioner's own words, "for the good of the game."

MARK T. CICHON
East Hartford, Conn.
SCOTT TRENHOLM
Simsbury, Conn.

MOVIE MADNESS

Sir.

On Monday I saw *The Cannonball Run*. I thought it was an excellent movie. On Thursday, I get my June 29th SI in the mail. What do I find but a review of *The Cannonball Run* written by some clown named Frank Deford. I don't think Deford is qualified to critique a Walt Disney cartoon. Maybe it was beyond his understanding, but the crashes he

continued

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The Savings & Loan Foundation

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If we all speak up, Washington will listen.

Z3

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LIVE!

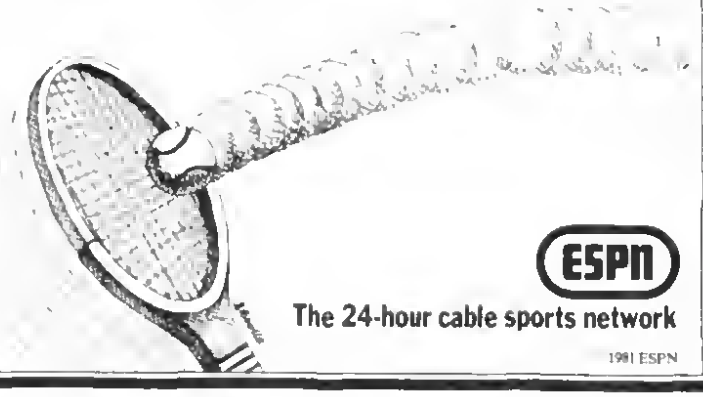
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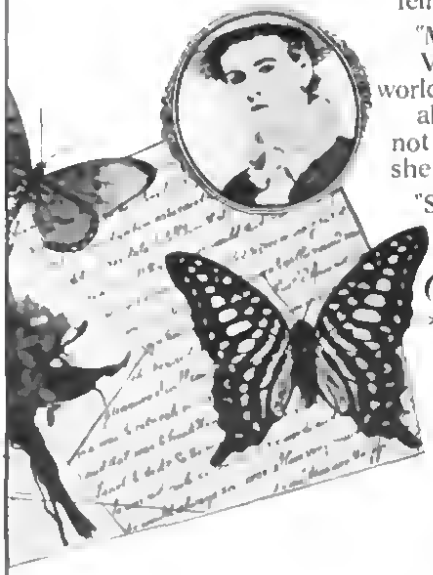
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LITTLE, BROWN

*Publishers Weekly

saw were meant to be amusing, and I thought they were. I thought I'd cancel my subscription when Deford described Peter Fonda, Roger Moore, Dean Martin, Jamie Farr and a number of others as "has-beens." But then I remembered I read SI for sports, not irresponsible movie reviews.

CHRIS GRILLI
New Eagle, Pa.

Sir:

While Frank Deford tries fruitlessly to emulate Rex, Rona and Gene, he's overlooking what is central to the movie. It's very funny slapstick designed to let the viewer escape from the real world for two hours. Nothing less, nothing more.

JOE WEINERT
Keene, N.H.

ON THE TRACK

Sir:

When December rolls around and you have to decide on Sportsman of the Year, don't rule out Carl Lewis (*Going to Great Lengths*, June 1). He has brought track and field back into prominence. He is not only the world's finest long jumper, but the best sprinter as well. My only question is: What does he have to do to make the cover, 30 feet?

TOM CUDWORTH
Bloomfield, N.J.

Sir:

As a runner and salesman, I enjoyed Kenny Moore's unique look at Steve Scott in your June 22 issue (*As We Join Our Show, Steve Is, as Usual, Running*). I got an extra chuckle from the limited view Scott's father, Gordon, has of the sales profession. He said, "I kind of doubt Steve would be any good in high-pressure business, like sales, because he's incapable of facing another person and being untruthful." In my four years of selling I've never lied to a customer, though I must admit I've stretched the truth now and then about my running exploits.

DALE R. MUELLER
Pittsburgh

SCOTCH MIST

Sir:

I found Clive Gammon's account of the Jim Watt-Alexis Arguello bout (*A Fight Without the Phony*, June 29) quite interesting and well written. There is one glaring mistake, though. Glasgow Rangers play in Ibrox Park, not Hampden Park. Ibrox Park, by the way, is currently undergoing renovations that will make it one of the most modern pitches in all of Europe. Hampden Park, home of the Scottish international side, is the site of League and Scottish Cup semis and finals.

DON GASTON
Manchester, Conn.

Letters should include the name, address and home telephone number of the writer and be addressed to The Editor, SPORTS ILLUSTRATED, Time & Life Building, Rockefeller Center, New York, N.Y. 10020.

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